



A fireman calls for more water on the burning Singer home above Glendora, Calif., Thursday Jan. 16, 2014. The wildfire in the foothills of Southern California's San Gabriel Mountains, burned a portion of the former Singer home, of sewing machine fame. (AP Photo/The Inland Valley Daily Bulletin,Will Lester)

Arrests made as homes burn in California wildfire

RAQUEL MARIA DILLON
Associated Press
GLENDORA, California (AP)

— Nearly 2,000 residents were evacuated and two homes burned in a wildfire that started early Thursday when three people tossed paper into a campfire in

the dangerously dry foothills of Southern California's San Gabriel Mountains, authorities said.

Embers from the fire fanned by gusty Santa Ana winds quickly spread into neighborhoods below where residents were awakened

in the pre-dawn darkness and ordered to evacuate. The three suspects, all men in their 20s, were arrested on charges of recklessly starting the fire that spread smoke across the Los Angeles basin and cast an eerie cloud all the way to

the coast. One resident suffered minor burns in the neighborhood abutting Angeles National Forest, just north of the San Gabriel Valley community of Glendora, according to Los Angeles County Fire Chief Daryl L.

Osby. Between 1,700 and 2,000 residents were evacuated and the order included 880 homes in Glendora and the neighboring foothill city of Azusa.

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WEF WARNS ON GLOBAL INCOME INEQUALITY GAP

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VATICAN UNDER SHARP CRITICISM OVER SEX ABUSE

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AROUND THE WORLD

French first lady improving in hospital

PARIS (AP) — France's first lady is making progress in a hospital, where she has been receiving care following a gossip magazine's report that President Francois Hollande was having a secret affair with an actress. Valerie Trierweiler was hospitalized Jan. 9 for rest after Closer magazine reported about Hollande's alleged affair with actress Julie Gayet. It says he sneaked into an apartment near the presidential palace to meet her. Trierweiler spokesman Patrice Biancone told The Associated Press by phone Thursday that the first lady was progressing, saying six days of rest "counts, after all." □

India police close to men in gang rape

NEW DELHI (AP) — Indian police said Thursday that they were closing in on five homeless men in the gang rape of a 51-year-old Danish tourist in New Delhi, a case that highlights the plague of sexual violence in the country and threatens to tarnish its tourism industry. Three other suspects were earlier picked up and accused of taking part in Tuesday's attack, which lasted nearly three hours and happened near Connaught Place, a popular shopping area in the heart of New Delhi, police spokesman Rajan Bhagat said. "We have identified the culprits. All of them are vagabonds," a police official said. □

Beijing's air pollution dangerously high

BEIJING (AP) — Beijing's skyscrapers receded into a dense gray smog Thursday as the capital saw the season's first wave of extremely dangerous pollution, with the concentration of toxic small particles registering more than two dozen times the level considered safe. The air took on an acrid odor, and many of the city's commuters wore industrial strength face masks as they hurried to work. "I couldn't see the tall buildings across the street this morning," said a traffic coordinator at a busy Beijing intersection who gave only his surname, Zhang. □

Colombia blast blamed on rebels kills 1

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — Colombian authorities say a motorcycle bomb has killed one person and wounded 20 in the southwestern town of Pradera. Police are blaming Thursday morning's blast on the rebels of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC. Town security chief Arbey Giraldo says the blast damaged city hall. He says the victim was a 45-year-old man. The regional police chief says two police officers were wounded in the legs by shrapnel. Pradera last suffered a bomb blast in October 2012 when a pair of suitcase bombs killed two people and wounded at least 30. □

Saudi Arabia sentences 4 men to death

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Two Chad nationals were sentenced to death by a specialized criminal court in Saudi Arabia for the killing of a French man in 2004, the kingdom's official news agency reported early Thursday, after it earlier sentenced two other men over the shooting deaths of four French nationals in 2007. The Saudi Press Agency said the men were part of a group of terrorists that included 10 other suspects, including Saudis and one Yemeni. Twelve other men convicted in the case were sentenced to between three and 23 years in prison. □

Davos: WEF warns over global income inequality

PAN PYLAS
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The gap between the rich and the poor is the most likely threat to the global economy in coming years, the World Economic Forum said Thursday in a risk assessment ahead of the gathering of political and business leaders in the Swiss ski resort of Davos. The Forum, which hosts the annual gathering, said income disparity in the wake of the global financial crisis is the "most likely risk to cause an impact on a global scale in the next decade" and warned of a "lost generation" of young

currency are past the worst of their debt crisis. The World Bank, in a report this week, went so far as to say the global economy has "turned a corner." However, the costs of the global financial crisis, which has left its mark on all corners of the world, are not expected to disappear overnight, and next week's meeting is likely to face criticism from groups campaigning against poverty and globalization. Adrian Monck, who is the head of communications for the Forum, defended the gathering, noting that inequality and wealth gap

"Since the global financial crisis it's been a race to the bottom in jobs, wages and living standards," he said. John Veihmeyer, chairman and CEO of KPMG's Americas division, said it's "absolutely understandable" that income inequality was revealed as a major risk and that fixing and improving education systems around the world is a key, if not sole, way to narrow the differences. In large parts of the developed world, the imbalance between government spending and tax-based revenue will likely mean budget restraint for



Snow-covered barbed wire is stored as soldiers prepare fences as a security measure for the upcoming World Economic Forum WEF in Davos Switzerland. The annual meeting lasts from Jan. 22 to Jan. 25, 2014.
(AP Photo/Keystone, Arno Balzarini)

people that could stoke tensions in society.

"The generation coming of age in the 2010s faces high unemployment and precarious job situations, hampering their efforts to build a future and raising the risk of social unrest," the Forum said in Global Risks 2014, which was compiled with contributions by 700 global experts. The warning from the Forum comes amid signs that the global economy has finally gotten over the worst that the financial crisis has thrown at it. The U.S. has begun to rein in some of the extraordinary monetary policies it put in place to get the economy out of recession and avoid a repeat of the 1930s. The countries that use the euro

were now on the agenda for discussion.

"It's important that people have that brought to their attention and that we mobilize people around those issues," he said.

Philip Jennings, General Secretary of the labor group UNI Global Union, said the risk report "should act as a wake-up call" to those attending Davos.

"These are global issues we can do something about: we can twist the global economy back into shape — this includes a new commitment to create jobs, address income inequality and falling living standards," said Jennings, whose organization represents 20 million workers from over 900 unions.

years to come at a time when economies are trying to gain traction.

"Many young people today face an uphill battle," said David Cole, chief risk officer at Swiss Re, a reinsurance firm that contributed to the Forum's risk assessment. "As a result of the financial crisis and globalization, the younger generation in the mature markets struggle with even fewer job opportunities and the need to support an aging population."

In a number of countries, particularly in those at the forefront of Europe's debt crisis, youth unemployment has risen to extremes. Greece and Spain have nearly 60 percent of their under-25s out of work. □

Canada urges US to decide on the Keystone XL line

ROB GILLIES
Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Canada's foreign minister said Thursday it's time for the Obama administration to make a decision on the controversial Keystone XL pipeline even if the answer is no.

"The time for a decision on Keystone is now, even if it's not the right one," John Baird said during a speech at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Washington. "We can't continue in this state of limbo."

Obama is expected to decide early this year on the pipeline, which is under review at the State Department. Some advocates fear another delay with the US mid-term elections approaching.

TransCanada's pipeline would carry 700,000 barrels of oil a day from Alberta and the U.S. Bakken across six U.S. states to refineries in the Texas Gulf Coast. Republicans, the Canadian government and business and labor groups, have long urged the Obama administration to approve the pipeline as a source of much-needed jobs and a step toward North American energy independence. Environmental groups have been pressuring Obama to reject the pipeline, saying it would carry "dirty oil" that contributes to global warming. They also worry about a spill. Baird warned if no new pipelines are built Canadian and Bakken-area oil would instead be shipped to the U.S. Gulf Coast by rail. "Compared to sending by pipelines, sending by rail causes higher greenhouse-gas emissions and raises the per-mile incident rate," Baird said. Concerns have been raised about the increasing use of rail to transport oil throughout North America. Several recent derailments have worried both officials and residents close to rail lines. In July, 47 people were killed in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, when a train with 72 oil tankers derailed and exploded in the small community. □

Arrests made, homes burn in California wildfire

Continued from Front

Many residents, some wearing masks, used garden hoses to wet the brush around their houses, even as firefighters ordered them to leave.

"Don't waste any more time with the water. Time to go," a firefighter ordered. At least 2 ½ square miles (6.5 square kilometers) of dry brush were charred in the wilderness area about 25 miles (40 kilometers) northeast of downtown Los Angeles.

Police said the three suspects were detained near

Colby Trail, where the fire was believed to have started. At least one was homeless, Glendora Police Chief Tim Staab said.

The notorious Santa Anas, linked to the spread of Southern California's worst wildfires, picked up at daybreak. The extremely dry Santa Anas blow downslope and can push fires out of the mountains and into communities below. The area, which has been historically dry, has been buffeted by the winds which have raised temperatures past 80 degrees Fahrenheit (27 Celsius). The

Santa Anas typically begin in the fall and last through winter into spring. A wet winter reduces fire risk, but the whole state is experiencing historically dry conditions.

TV news helicopters spotted embers igniting palm trees in residential yards as firefighters with hoses beat back flames lapping at the edges of homes. Homes are nestled in canyons and among rugged ridges that made access difficult.

Glendora police said officers went door to door ordering residents of the city of 50,000 to leave. Cit-

rus College, located in the heart of Glendora, canceled classes for the day. Several schools were closed. The Glendora Unified School District closed Goddard Middle School, which was being used as a fire department command post. District spokeswoman Michelle Hunter said 900 students attend the school, which is near the fire and within the evacuation area.

The smoke spread across metropolitan Los Angeles to the coast and was visible from space in Weather Service satellite photos. □



A wildfire burns in the hills just north of the San Gabriel Valley community of Glendora, Calif. on Thursday, Jan 16, 2014. Southern California authorities have ordered the evacuation of homes at the edge of a fast-moving wildfire burning in the dangerously dry foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains. (AP Photo/Nick Ut)

Detroit bankruptcy judge rejects deal with banks

DAVID EGGERT
ED WHITE

Associated Press

LANSING, Michigan (AP)

— A judge overseeing Detroit's bankruptcy again rejected a deal Thursday to end a disastrous financial agreement with major banks, dealing a blow to officials who want to put the issue behind them as they work on a broader plan to get the city out of the largest public insolvency filing in U.S. history.

Judge Steven Rhodes turned down a \$169 million compromise, saying "it's just too much money." He

had rejected a \$230 million deal on the same grounds in December.

Rhodes didn't offer his own number publicly but encouraged all sides to keep talking. He then cleared the courtroom to talk privately to lawyers.

"It's higher than the highest reasonable number. ... By any rational analysis, it's not close," the judge said moments earlier.

"This court must be the one to stop it if necessary. It is necessary here," Rhodes said. In 2009, Detroit pledged a critical revenue source, casino taxes, as

collateral to avoid defaulting on pension debt payments. That agreement allowed the city to get fixed interest rates on bonds with UBS and Bank of America. But it backfired when rates dropped during the recession. Detroit had lined up a loan to pay for the settlement. Emergency manager Kevyn Orr wants to get the "swaps deal," as it's known, out of the way so he can focus on proposing a sweeping plan to deal with the city's long-term debt of \$18 billion. He's pledged to unveil his proposal this month, weeks

ahead of schedule.

Gov. Rick Snyder met with lawmakers Thursday in the Michigan capital of Lansing to discuss the possibility of contributing state money to shore up Detroit's pension plans and prevent the sale of city-owned art, days after foundations committed \$330 million to the effort.

The governor spoke with the senators behind closed doors and may soon ask the Legislature to match the foundations' contribution over a number of years, possibly in his February budget proposal. □

Christie hires counsel as lawmakers prepare subpoenas

KATE ZERNIKE

MARC SANTORA

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With New Jersey lawmakers preparing to issue subpoenas for some of Gov.

in an internal investigation into the lane closings on the George Washington Bridge.

Christie, meanwhile, continuing to deal with the po-

an act of political retribution, sought to change the conversation. He traveled to the Jersey Shore for a visit with homeowners hit hard by Hurricane Sandy.

Speaking in Manahawkin, he vowed not to be distracted in his work as governor. "I want you to know I am as focused on completing this mission as I was when I woke up on the morning of Oct. 30, 2012," Christie said. "And nothing will distract me from getting that job done, nothing." But he acknowledged that the hordes of media that attended the event were most likely not there to document the distribution of federal aid money.

"I suspect there are more cameras here than I originally thought for a Sandy event in Manahawkin," he said. While he was working to re-establish a sense of normalcy, the decision of his office to hire a long-time associate of former Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani

to conduct an internal investigation of his office underscored the continuing threat to his political career.

Christie's announcement said that the lawyer, Randy Mastro, would work with the inquiry by the U.S. attorney's office into the lane closings, which gridlocked emergency vehicles, commuters and school buses in Fort Lee, N.J., for four days in September.

But while the announcement said that Mastro would also assist with "other appropriate inquiries," it left unsaid whether Christie intended to cooperate with bipartisan investigations that are to be authorized Thursday by the New Jersey Legislature.

When asked directly whether the governor considered the legislative inquiries "appropriate," a spokesman for the governor, Colin Reed, declined to answer. "I have nothing to add beyond the state-

ment," he said.

As the Democratic-led Assembly met to consider the investigation, Republicans pressed to put a time limit on the probe, and questioned why the Legislature should investigate at all, given the U.S. attorney's investigation.

Christie and Giuliani are longtime friends, and several Giuliani campaign aides work for the governor, including Maria Comella, his communications director, and Mike DuHaime, his chief political strategist. Bill Stepien, Christie's two-time campaign manager, whom Christie cut ties with last week after documents linked him to the cover-up of the lane closings, also once worked for Giuliani.

Mastro was an assistant U.S. attorney under Giuliani in New York, and later served as a deputy mayor. He now works for Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, which has long served as Christie's private counsel. □



New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie hugs Amy Peters, of Manahawkin, Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014, in Manahawkin, N.J., as he meets with homeowners who lost their homes last year to Superstorm Sandy. Christie spoke to Superstorm Sandy victims one week after the meeting was hastily canceled because of a scandal over traffic jams that appear to have been manufactured by his aides. Christie and Community Affairs Commissioner Richard Constable III announced a Sandy housing recovery milestone Thursday as the governor seeks to put the traffic scandal behind him. (AP Photo/Mel Evans)

Chris Christie's closest aides on Thursday, his administration announced the hiring of its own lawyer to assist

political firestorm that erupted last week after revelations that his top aides orchestrated the lane closings as

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Gunman, 2 others dead at Indiana grocery store

TOM COYNE

Associated Press

ELKHART, Indiana (AP) — A man fatally shot two women in U.S. grocery store and was waving a gun at

a kneeling store manager when police officers arrived and killed the gunman, authorities said Thursday.

The manager and another

employee at the store in Midwestern Indiana state escaped unharmed despite confrontations with the gunman Wednesday night, Indiana State Police

Sgt. Trent Smith said at a news conference.

Smith said city police received a call about a gunman in the store shortly after 10 p.m. Officers who were nearby on an unrelated call arrived within three minutes and found the shooter brandishing a semi-automatic handgun at the manager, who was on his knees on the floor as if in prayer.

When the shooter turned toward the officers, the manager ran. The gunman then also ran, down a parallel aisle, Smith said. Police ran into him moments later as they were clearing the store and as the shooter was doing something with the gun. That's when officers shot the gunman, Smith said.

State police identified the shooter as Shawn Walter Bair, 22. Officers found the bodies of 20-year-old Krystle Dikes, an employee of the store who was stocking shelves, and 44-year-old customer Rachelle Godfread about 12 aisles apart. Godfread been shot multiple times, Smith said.

Smith said surveillance video from the store showed Bair shot at another employee but missed as she fled. She escaped unharmed.

Police are still seeking a motive and trying to determine whether there was any relationship between Bair and any of his victims, Smith said.

A large knife was found near the gunman's body, he said. □



A photo of Shawn Walter Bair, right, hangs on a wall as Elkhart police wait for the start of a news conference Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014 in Elkhart, Ind. Authorities intified Blair at the man who fatally shot two women in a northern Indiana grocery store on Wednesday.

(AP Photo/ Elkhart Truth, Jennifer Shephard)

Newtown:

Gunman's 2011 radio call a possible clue

NEW HAVEN, Connecticut (AP) — The man who carried out the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre in Newtown apparently called a radio station a year earlier to discuss the 2009 mauling of a Connecticut woman by a chimpanzee.

The caller believed to be Adam Lanza speaks softly on a show on the University of Oregon's campus radio station and blames "civilization" for the animal's attack. It would be the first known public recording of Lanza's voice. The 20-year-old man killed 20 children and six adults at the school in Newtown on Dec. 14, 2012.

A person with the username "Smiggles" describes making the call afterward in a Web posting. State police documents refer to instant messages from "Smiggles" as presumably being from the Sandy Hook gunman.

A former classmate, Kyle Kromberg, told the New York Daily News that he recognized the voice as

Lanza's.

In 2009 in Stamford, Charla Nash was blinded, lost both hands and underwent a face transplant after being mauled by a chimpanzee named Travis, who belonged to her friend. Nash had gone to the owner's home to help lure the 200-pound (91-kilogram) chimpanzee back inside. But the chimp went berserk and ripped off Nash's nose, lips, eyelids and hands before being shot to death by a police officer.

The caller believed to be Lanza said Travis was raised like a child and was highly domesticated, noting he used an electric tooth brush, a TV remote control and even the computer. Travis was integrated into society, the caller said, recalling the chimp's interactions with humans and his acting in TV commercials.

"Look what civilization did to him," said the caller, who identified himself as Greg. "It had the same exact effect on him as it has on hu-

mans. He was profoundly sick in every sense of the term and he had to resort to these surrogate activities like watching baseball and looking at pictures on the computer screen and taking Xanax."

Travis was desperate for his owner to drive him somewhere, "and the best reason I can think of for why he would want that looking at his entire life would be that some little thing he experienced was the last straw and he was overwhelmed by the life that he had and he wanted to get out of it by changing his environment and the best way that he knew how to deal with that was by getting his owner to drive him somewhere else," the caller said.

The caller compared the attack to other random acts of violence.

"I just don't think it would be such a stretch," the caller said, "to say that he very well could have been a teenage mall shooter or something like that." □

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Long-running D.C. show faces a major plot twist

ASHLEY PARKER

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WASHINGTON - This week's news that Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., is planning to retire at the end of the year reverberated around the House of Represen-

But high jinks and merrymaking aside - and to be sure, the group home has seen plenty of that - Schumer's missive belied a more poignant truth: With Miller retiring, the future of the house he owns has

The Federal-style rowhouse sits just around the corner from Tortilla Coast, a popular Capitol Hill watering hole, and is painted a shade of gray-blue, with deep green trim. Miller and his wife took out a mort-

fornia or keep a place in Washington.

"We've got to find him a great job so he stays in D.C.," Schumer said Wednesday, patting Miller on the back.

"Washington's Algonquin table," as the townhouse was once nicknamed, began in earnest in the early 1980s. During a bad snowstorm, former Rep. Marty Russo of Illinois asked if he could sleep there and, in Miller's telling, "never moved out." Then came former Rep. Leon E. Panetta of California. And the group finally pressured Schumer, then a House member, to move in through strong-arming tactics more typically found in smoky back rooms.

"One night I go to my house and my toothbrush is gone, my bedding is gone," Schumer said. In its place, he found a sign on the bathroom mirror instructing him to head to Miller's house to claim his belongings. "And so I moved in," he said.

Miller, meanwhile, was quick to point out that Schumer was living in an illegal basement apartment: "French poets lived better than Schumer was living," he said.

the powerful House Ways and Means Committee, became the group's link to former Rep. Daniel Rostenkowski of Illinois, a Democrat who was chairman of the committee and called them "my four horsemen." "So we could talk to the chairman of Ways and Means because we were friends of his friends, and later we became his friends, and that was no small accomplishment in those days," Miller said.

Other roommates included former Reps. Bill Delahunt of Massachusetts and Samuel Gejdenson of Connecticut. Gejdenson lost his bed when he lost his House seat in 2000, but his picture stills hangs on the refrigerator, and the group favors a nearby Italian restaurant where his son, Ari, is an owner. (Their other favorite spot is Hunan Dynasty, where the Sichuan string beans are the go-to dish - "Our nod to healthy eating," Durbin said dryly.) Group house living, however, has not always been quite so cheery. In 2010, when it looked like the Senate majority leader, Harry Reid of Nevada, might lose his seat, both Durbin and Schumer began quietly vying for the top spot. The



The row house, left, owned by Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.) in Washington. With Miller retiring, the future of the house he owns and shares with other Democratic members of Congress has been thrust into limbo, and an era of meaningful political and personal relationships may be drawing to a close. (Doug Mills/ The New York Times)

tatives, where Miller has served since 1975.

But the news hit even harder around another less stately, more fratlike house about a quarter-mile southeast of the Capitol, where Miller has lived for more than 30 years with a rotating cadre of congressional Democrats - and which served as the inspiration for the Amazon web series "Alpha House."

Miller, 68, who owns the two-story, two-bedroom house - part messy crash pad, part political seminar - currently shares it with Sens. Richard J. Durbin of Illinois, the majority whip, and Charles E. Schumer of New York, the No. 3 Democrat.

And within the rowhouse, the consternation was so great that Schumer even took to Twitter to post a cheeky message: "Seeking roommate. 20 terms in the House & unmatched legislative record preferred. Lover of cold cereal a must." (Durbin, meanwhile, said that his main requirement was that any future housemate "doesn't snore too loud.")

been thrust into limbo, and an era of meaningful political and personal relationships may be drawing to a close.

"I've kept them warm when it's cold, I've kept them dry when it's wet, and I've fed them when they're hungry," Miller said. "I've been carrying out the gospel with respect to Schumer and Durbin."

Sen. Bernard Sanders of Vermont put the situation a bit less delicately when he happened to pass Miller and Durbin chatting outside the Capitol on Wednesday afternoon: "Durbin is worried he's going to be homeless," joked Sanders, an independent who caucuses with the Democrats.

Miller, who announced his plans Monday, is one of at least 15 House members so far who have said they will retire at the end of 2014.

Schumer described Miller as "not just a landlord but a house mother" where Durbin claimed the second bedroom more than two decades ago and where Schumer sleeps on a bed in the living room.

gage of just over \$74,000 when they bought the 1,636-square-foot dwelling in 1977, and the house is now assessed at just over \$700,000 by the district's Office of Tax and Revenue.



Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), Rep. Bill Delahunt (D-Mass.), Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.) prepare themselves plates of Chinese take-out at the home they share in Washington. (Doug Mills/ The New York Times)

Each housemate pays about \$800 per month in rent.

Miller has not decided if he is going to return to Cali-

The foursome quickly became a formidable force. They sat on different committees and shared information. Russo, who was on

tension became so great that, at one point, there were rumblings that Durbin was considering moving out. □

US Financial Front: American consumer prices up 0.3 percent; the most in 6 months

C. S. RUGABER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. consumer prices rose last month by the most since June, driven up by higher gas prices, but excluding energy, inflation was tame. The Labor Department said Thursday that the consumer price index rose a seasonally adjusted 0.3 percent in December, after a flat reading the previous month.

Prices increased 1.5 percent in 2013, down from 1.7 percent in 2012. That's below the Federal Reserve's target of 2 percent. Fed officials have said in recent months that they are watching the inflation data closely to ensure it does not fall too far.

"The price data continue to deliver the same message: no signs of inflation pressures in the US economy," said Laura Rosner, an economist at BNP Paribas.

Gas prices jumped 3.1 percent in December, the biggest gain since June. Food prices ticked up 0.1 percent, pushed up by higher restaurant costs. Grocery prices were flat, held down by the biggest drop in fruit and vegetable prices in five years.

Excluding the volatile food and energy categories, core prices increased just 0.1 percent in December. Car prices were flat and airline fares plummeted 4.7 percent, the most in 14 years. Those declines were offset by a big increase in clothing costs, which followed three months of decreases, and rents also rose.

Core prices increased 1.7 percent in 2013, down from a 1.9 percent increase in 2012.

Inflation has been held back in recent years by sluggish growth and high unemployment, which



Slippers are sold at a Kmart in New York. The Labor Department released the Consumer Price Index for December on Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014.

(AP Photo/Julio Cortez)

makes it harder for retailers and other businesses to raise prices.

Persistently low inflation has allowed the Federal Reserve to pursue its extraordinary stimulus program. The Fed launched an \$85 billion-a-month bond purchase program in September 2012 in an effort to keep interest rates low and spur more borrowing and spending. Fed policymak-

ers cut those purchases to \$75 billion this month.

Fed policymakers could continue their purchases for longer if inflation doesn't move closer to their 2 percent target. Fed officials have said ultra-low inflation poses economic risks. Among other concerns, falling inflation raises inflation-adjusted interest rates, making it harder to pay off debts and potentially dis-

couraging borrowing. The Fed meets again at the end of this month.

Critics of the bond-buying program fear it will spark higher inflation in the future. But the inflation has yet to materialize.

A small amount of inflation can be good for the economy, because it encourages consumers and businesses to spend and invest before prices rise further. □

US weekly unemployment benefit claims drop to 326k

JOSH BOAK

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of Americans seeking unemployment benefits fell 2,000 last week to a seasonally adjusted 326,000, a sign that layoffs are weighing less on the job market and economic growth.

The Labor Department said Thursday that the less volatile four-week average dropped 13,500 to 335,000. More than 4.7 million Americans collected benefits at the end of last year. The figure has declined almost 1.2 million over the past 12 months. But that number is poised drop by another 1.35 million in upcoming weeks. That's because a special federal program expired last month and is starting to affect recipients. Applications appear to have stabilized near pre-

recession levels, a positive sign for hiring going forward.

The job market had picked up toward the end of last year before losing some momentum in December. A mere 74,000 jobs were created last month, after the economy added an average of 213,500 new jobs in the previous four months.

Many economists blamed the slowdown in hiring on bad weather and statistical quirks, and projected stronger gains in the new year.

"Hiring indicators are almost uniformly quite strong, and we think the underlying trend in payroll growth likely has picked up, despite the fluke slowing in December," said Ian Shepherdson, chief economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics. □



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Catalonia votes to ask Spain for secession ballot

**ALAN CLENDENNING
MANU FERNANDEZ**

Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP)

— A European season of separatist fervor kicked off Thursday with Catalan lawmakers voting in favor of asking for the right to hold a referendum on independence from Spain. The European Union was watching closely as Belgium's Dutch speakers gear up to push for greater autonomy in May elections, and Scotland prepares to hold its own referendum on breaking away from Britain in the fall.

The vote was a milestone in years of mass protests by Catalans, who are fiercely proud of their distinct culture and language, demanding the right to decide whether they want to secede. As lawmakers debated at the Catalan parliament in Barcelona on Thursday before the vote, about 150 Catalans outside waved independence flags. A smaller group unfurled Spanish flags before the debate began, yelling "Catalonia is Spain!"

But the vote was also largely symbolic.

Catalonia can ask Spain for permission to hold an independence vote but Madrid still has the power to say "no" — and it almost certainly will.

Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy has repeatedly said he won't allow a Catalonia secession referendum because Spain's 1978 constitution doesn't envision anything but a unified Spanish state, and mandates that referendums affecting Spain must be held nationally and not regionally. He has an absolute majority in parliament that assures he will prevail, and the main opposition Socialist party also opposes a referendum vote.

The Thursday vote could fan the flames of an already impassioned independence drive, even though it fell just short of the two-thirds majority that supporters hoped for. □

United Nations reports mass executions in north Syria

NICK CUMMING-BRUCE

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GENEVA - A recent series of mass executions attributed to jihadist rebels in Syria may constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity, Navi Pillay, the U.N. human rights chief, said Thursday.

Mass executions of civilians and of fighters who were no longer participating in hostilities were reported in the northern cities of Aleppo, Idlib and Raqqa.

They were carried out by armed opposition groups in Syria, in particular by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, Pillay said in a statement, citing what she described as reliable testimony by witnesses.

The executions appear to have coincided with a succession of fierce battles between opposition groups in northern Syria since the start of the year as moderate and Islamist factions try to drive out

hard-line fighters linked to al-Qaida.

Many bodies, often handcuffed and blindfolded, were found eight days ago in a children's hospital in Aleppo used by ISIL as a base until an attack by other opposition groups forced ISIL militants to withdraw, Pillay said. A witness interviewed by the U.N. human rights office identified four local media activists among the dead, she said. Pillay also cited "deeply

disturbing reports" of mass executions by ISIL fighters when they pulled out of Raqqa early this month and when they regained control of the town this week.

The reports, which suggested that extremist rebels who were forced to abandon their positions had executed prisoners, were particularly alarming in view of the large number of civilians held by these groups, she said. □

Army chief said to be focused on Egypt's problems

HAMZA HENDAWI

Associated Press

CAIRO (AP)

— Having secured victory in a referendum on a relatively liberal constitution that he championed, Egypt's military chief is turning his attention to the country's overwhelming array of problems — from health and education to government subsidies and investment, insiders said Thursday.

The revelations offer the latest indication that Gen. Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi is planning a run for president, capping a stunning transformation for the 59-year-old who started in the infantry. He was widely seen as an obscure and acquiescent subordinate a year and a half ago when then-President Mohamed Morsi promoted him to defense minister in what has emerged as a colossal political miscalculation.

In swift succession, el-Sissi threw Morsi in jail along with hundreds of his Islamist cohorts, his Muslim Brotherhood has been declared a terrorist group with membership in it banned, and a carefully orchestrated personality cult appears to have been successfully engineered for the general. El-Sissi remains an enigma: Little is known about his private life, other than he is married with four children. His daily activities and whereabouts are generally hidden from view.

Although there are few credible public opinion polls in Egypt to know for sure, el-Sissi appears to have struck a chord through a combination of cunning moves and a personality that offers

something for everyone in a country that is highly polarized along religious and socio-economic fault lines. "It appears that el-Sissi's populist power is derived from his ability to instill optimism, joy and pride in the hearts of many Egyptians," Adel Iskandar, an expert on Arab affairs who lectures at Georgetown University, wrote in a blog this

week. "The Muslim Brotherhood, the January 25 (2011) revolutionaries, and anyone who opposes the country's current trajectory must contend with this new fact."

It was evident this week that many people voted for el-Sissi as much as for the new charter. Many, particularly women, kissed posters of the general after casting their ballots or chanted: "El-Sissi is my president." He had asked women to take their spouses and children to the balloting, and the response was overwhelming, with women dominating lines outside polling stations in Cairo and other big cities. A popular video on social networking sites hyped the sentiment.

"All of Egypt's women listened to el-Sissi when he asked us to come out and vote. ... If he needs anything else, he only has to tell

cause he comes from Gamaliya," said driver Mahmoud Farouq, a father of four, who was sitting in a coffee shop.

Sohair Mohammed, a housemaid with two children, expressed her admiration by saying: "I adore him. I hope he becomes president. If he does not run for president, I may kill myself." □



An Egyptian woman dances in front of a polling station holding a poster of Egypt's Defense Minister, Gen. Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, and a national flag in Cairo, Egypt. (AP Photo/Khalil Hamra)

us and, God willing, we will not disappoint him," a female voter said on the clip. In el-Sissi's neighborhood of Gamaliya, as in much of the country, he is regarded as a savior and a hero. In a small alley where he once lived, an office bore this sign: "Headquarters of the campaign asking el-Sissi to run for president."

A banner nearby declared: "The people of Gamaliya congratulate el-Sissi on his birthday."

"He is a man that we will all follow, and not just be-

The Muslim Brotherhood won each of the five elections held since the revolution that deposed autocratic leader Hosni Mubarak in early 2011. Consequently, there was an anti-democratic veneer to the July 3 coup and the government's subsequent actions, which included a severe crackdown on protests, arrests of journalists and the establishment of hotlines, where people could report suspected members of the Brotherhood. □

Israeli PM slams settlement critics as hypocrites

ARON HELLER

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Thursday dismissed international critics of Jewish settlements, calling them hypocrites and saying claims that the construction on occupied lands poses an obstacle to peace were “bogus.”

Israelis and Palestinians began peace talks in July after years of stalemate and the Israeli government has come under heavy criticism for continuing its construction plans throughout talks. More than 500,000 Israelis live in settlements in the West Bank and east Jerusalem. But Netanyahu insisted continued construction in existing settlements was “part of the deal” when talks began and questioned the motives of those who were outraged now. “I think this is a bogus claim,” he said in his annual address to international journalists. “I think that this is hypocritical.”

While the Palestinians dropped a longstanding demand that Israel halt all settlement construc-

tion when peace talks resumed, they say they received assurances that Israel would show restraint. Since then, Israel has approved plans for thousands of new settler homes.

The Palestinians, and the international community, view the settlements as illegal or illegitimate. U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry recently said the construction raises questions about Israel's commitment to peace.

In his comments, Netanyahu took specific aim at the European Union, which has been outspoken in its criticism of settlement construction. On Thursday, several EU countries, including Britain, France and Italy, said they would be summoning local Israeli ambassadors to protest the settlements, Israel's Foreign Ministry said.

Netanyahu questioned why the EU protested the construction of “a few houses,” but did not summon Palestinian diplomats over Palestinian misdeeds. “When did the EU call in the Palestinian ambassadors to complain about

the incitement that calls for Israel's destruction?” he said.

“I think it is time to stop this hypocrisy. I think it is time to inject some balance and

Palestinians, ‘Basically you can do anything you want, say anything you want and you won't be held accountable.’”

Under heavy American

by both sides.

With an April target date for an agreement approaching, the U.S. has said Kerry will soon return with bridging proposals for



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, right, listens to Jordan's King Abdullah II, left, as they meet at the Royal Palace in Amman, Jordan, Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014. (AP Photo/Yousef Allan)

fairness to this discussion. Because I think this imbalance and this bias against Israel doesn't advance peace,” he added. “I think it pushed peace further away because it tells the

pressure, Israel and the Palestinians resumed peace talks after a five year lull. So far, there have been no outward signs of progress, and the talks have been marred by finger pointing

a framework deal.

The Palestinians seek the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza Strip, territories captured by Israel in 1967, for an independent state.□

EU, Russia cancel planned dinner

JUERGEN BAETZ

Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — European Union leaders and Russian President Vladimir Putin have canceled a joint dinner and cut a long-planned summit short in the wake of their confrontation over Ukraine's future.

The summit was initially meant to start with the dinner and last until the following afternoon, but now the meeting with Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso and others in Brussels on Jan. 28 will only last about 2 ½ hours, the EU said Thursday. The format has been changed “in

light of the recent developments,” and participants will have an “in-depth reflection” about the EU-Russia relationship rather than a discussion about specific issues, Commission spokeswoman Maja Kocijancic said. Russia in November lured Ukraine with financial incentives, including a \$15-billion bailout loan, to snub the 28-nation bloc and seek closer cooperation with Moscow instead. The Ukrainian leadership's last-minute decision to side with Russia sparked weeks-long anti-government protests in Kiev and elsewhere in the country.□

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Vatican comes under sharp criticism for sex abuse

**JOHN HEILPRIN
NICOLE WINFIELD
Associated Press**

GENEVA (AP) — The dressing down came in the unlikelyst of places, a stuffy U.N. conference room be-

and culture of secrecy had contributed to the global priest sex abuse scandal, the Vatican was called to account. U.N. experts interrogated The Holy See for eight hours on Thursday

forced to defend its record at length or in public. It resembled a courtroom cross-examination, only no question was off-limits, dodging the answer wasn't an option and the pro-

tory to the U.N. Convention for the Rights of the Child, which among other things calls for governments to take all adequate measures to protect children from harm and ensure their interests are placed above all else.

The Holy See was one of the first states to ratify the treaty in 1990, eager to contribute the church's experience in caring for children in Catholic schools, hospitals, orphanages and refugee centers. The Holy See submitted a first implementation report in 1994, but didn't provide progress reports for nearly two decades until 2012.

By then, the clerical sex abuse scandal had exploded around the globe: thousands of priests were accused of raping and molesting thousands of children over decades while their bishops moved them from parish to parish rather than report them to police. Critics allege the Holy See, the central government of the 1.2-billion strong Catholic Church, contributed to the problem by encouraging a cul-

ture of secrecy to protect the church's reputation at the expense of victims. At times, the exchanges were sharp Thursday.

"How can we address this whole systematic policy of silencing of victims?" asked committee member Benyam Mezmur, an Ethiopian academic. "There are two principles that I see are being undermined in a number of instances, namely transparency and accountability."

Monsignor Charles Scicluna, the Vatican's former sex crimes prosecutor, replied: "I am with you when you say that all of these nice words will not mean anything ... if there is not more transparency and accountability on the local level." The Vatican insisted it had little jurisdiction to sanction pedophile priests. "Priests are not functionaries of the Vatican," Archbishop Silvano Tomasi, the Vatican's U.N. ambassador in Geneva, told the committee. "Priests are citizens of their own states, and they fall under the jurisdiction of their own country." □



Vatican's UN Ambassador Monsignor Silvano Tomasi, left, speaks with Former Vatican Chief Prosecutor of Clerical Sexual Abuse Charles Scicluna, right, prior to the start of a questioning over clerical sexual abuse of children at the headquarters of the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, OHCHR, in Geneva, Switzerland, Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014.

(AP Photo/Martial Trezzini)

fore an obscure human rights committee. After decades of fending off accusations that its policies

about the scale of abuse and what it was doing to prevent it, marking the first time the Vatican had been

ceedings were webcast live. The Vatican was compelled to appear before the committee as a signa-

Peacekeepers arrive in Central African Republic

**HIPPOLYTE MARBOUA
Associated Press
BANGUI, Central African Republic (AP)** — Dozens of peacekeepers from Rwanda landed Thursday in Central African Republic, where waves of retaliatory violence between Christians and Muslims have left more than 1,000 people dead.

About 44 Rwandan soldiers had arrived by midday and another 33 were expected later, Lt. Col. Jean-Paul Karangoua said. Rwanda has pledged more than 800 peacekeepers toward the African mission working to stabilize Central African Republic as it teeters on the brink of anarchy. The aid from the Rwandans is particularly significant, because the international community has said it wants to prevent Central African Republic from becoming a repeat of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda when more than 500,000 people were killed. "That's not to say that

only the Rwandans who have experienced genocide in their country are responsible for stopping the slaughter in Central African Republic," said Col. Leon Ndong-Ntutume, a spokesman for the African peacekeeping mission known as MISCA that has about 4,400 troops.

"We're all working to stop genocide from happening in CAR and to calm the country." Former colonizer France sent 1,600 troops last month in an effort to help secure the country until an African-led mission was at full strength.

Muslim rebels from the distant north united to overthrow the president, who was in office for a decade, in March and later were blamed for wide-scale abuses against the country's Christian majority. An armed Christian movement known as the anti-balaka arose in opposition to the new leadership, and

the Christian militiamen launched an attempted coup in early December. Violence exploded in the capital, and more than 1,000 people died in the days that followed. Some victims were stoned to death in the streets by angry mobs who accused them of working with the rebel government.

Michel Djotodia, who was installed as president after the March coup, stepped down from power last week amid mounting international criticism over his government's failure to rein in the violence.

A national transitional council is meeting this week in Bangui to select an interim leader who will guide the country toward elections before year-end. Critics, though, already say that timetable is not feasible given that so many administrative buildings were looted and records destroyed during the past year. □



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Venezuela's national dog keeps Chavez legacy alive

JOSHUA GOODMAN
RICARDO NUNES
Associated Press

MUCUCHIES, Venezuela (AP) — The Soviets made space dog Laika a national hero and Americans have fallen for presidential pets from Checkers to Bo. In Venezuela, a rare breed of shaggy sheepdog has come to symbolize the patriotic legacy of the late Hugo Chavez.

Venezuela's former president rescued the mucuchies, named for this Andean town where the breed originated 400 years ago, from near-extinction in 2008 by providing funding to breed the remaining 23 purebreds, and he used to delight in recalling how one early tail-wagger called Nevado fought at the side of his idol, 19th century independence hero Simon Bolivar.

"Every time Chavez hosted a foreign leader the president's office would call me up and make sure I brought the dogs," said Walter Demendoza, president of the Nevado Foundation, which works to rescue the breed. "He wanted the dog to be known around the world as a symbol of our country." Chavez died from cancer last March, but interest in the dog in Latin America surged after ally Argentine President Cristina Fernandez reappeared in public in November after brain surgery dotting on a fluffy, white puppy given to her by Chavez's brother.

Overnight the dog Simon, named after Bolivar, became a social media sensation. This month, Chavez's successor, Nicolas Maduro, named a government campaign to rescue street dogs in honor of the The Liberator's best friend.

Thanks to Chavez's efforts,

there are now almost 200 purebred mucuchies, and the dog is on its way to joining the group of 343 breeds officially recognized by the World Canine Organization. The largest contingent, including the parents of Argentina's new "first dog," live in the high-altitude moorlands known as paramos, at the extreme northern edge of the Andes in Venezuela.

It was here in the village of Mucuchies, 3,000 meters (9,843 feet) above sea level, that the greatest canine encounter in Venezuela's history took place. Legend has it that in 1813 Bolivar's army was approaching a farm when the independence fighters were stopped in their tracks by a giant, barking guard dog. Weapons drawn, the rebels were about to kill the dog when Bolivar, marveling at its beauty and bravery, ordered them to back down.

"They were going to slaughter it like a beast but Bolivar stopped them," said Edgar Albarran, a breeder in Mucuchies who greets tourists dressed in a traditional red wool ruana and straw hat. The pup was named Nevado, or Snowy, for its white coat resembling the Andes peaks, and was given to Bolivar by the farm's owner. The two became inseparable, except when Nevado was briefly nabbed by the loyalist Spanish army in a bid to entrap South America's Liberator.

The dog died in the final battle of Venezuela's independence war in 1821. Although honored by a statue in the central plaza of Mucuchies, the dog had largely faded from memory. Venezuelan tourists to the town were unaware of the dog's storied history or even the breed's existence,

confusing it with a St. Bernard.

In fact, the mucuchies is more closely related to another mountain dog, the Pyrenean mastiff, which

everything from Mexico's Chihuahua to the pre-Incan Peruvian hairless dog, none can compete with the mucuchies for historical significance, says

breed," said Malo Alcrudo, who in 2012 visited the Nevado Foundation's kennels.

For Chavez, who was obsessed with all things Bo-



In this May 18, 2003 photo released by Miraflores Press Office, Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez holds a mucuchies pup during his radio and television show "Hello President" in Mucuchies, near Merida, Venezuela. The dog known as mucuchies, or Venezuelan sheepdog, was rescued from near-extinction and historical oblivion by Chavez and is now on its way to being internationally recognized as an official canine breed.

(AP Photo/Miraflores Press Office)

was brought to the New World by the Spanish conquistadores and used to herd sheep.

While Latin America is full of distinctive breeds, ev-

Rafael Malo Alcrudo, a dog-show judge and prize-winning breeder in Spain of the heavier-set Pyrenean mastiff.

"It's an extremely noble

livarian and constantly invoked his idol's political thinking in speeches, there couldn't have been a more potent symbol of the nation's identity. □

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US collegians on baseball diplomacy tour in Cuba

PETER ORSI

Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — Balls and strikes, not politics, ruled this week at a baseball diamond in Havana, as last year's NCAA Division II championship team from the University of Tampa played an exhibition game against a Cuban youth squad Wednesday. The visitors scraped out a hard-fought 2-1 win, but the encounter was more about bridging the vast

to come here and play baseball against them, win or lose isn't the most important thing."

In their weeklong tour, the Floridians are acting as cultural ambassadors, not only in their interactions with the Cuban coaches and players they face, but also student groups, artists, children and others.

On Tuesday they visited what's known as Havana's "hot corner," after the baseball nickname for third

was very impressive," Urso said.

On a gray, rainy Wednesday, the weather held just long enough to get in a full nine innings before a few dozen spectators at Santiago Mederos, a peeling-blue-paint stadium in Havana's Sporting City complex.

For one day at least, the heated rhetoric that often characterizes the divide between Havana and Washington was set aside

bench stood and erupted in applause for their rival's play.

The trip is also about young men getting to know a country that's largely off limits to Americans, for whom tourism to the island is illegal under Washington's 52-year-old economic embargo.

Preston Packrall, a 22-year-old senior and Tampa native who expected to see action as a relief pitcher, called his first experience overseas "eye-opening." He said the team's infielders took notes from the Cubans on footwork and rhythm, while the locals asked the visitors about how they structure practices.

"I think it's a very important experience," Packrall said. "You learn to appreciate others' cultures through a common thing. ... They're human just like we are. They put their pants on one leg at a time just like we do."

Two more games are scheduled before the Tampa squad returns home Sunday.

Cultural exchanges between Cuba and the U.S. have become increasingly common in recent years. President Barack Obama's administration has restored so-called people-to-people tours, resulting in tens of thousands of Americans visiting the island each year legally. Musicians, artists, religious leaders and academics are also crossing the Florida Straits more frequently. □

Suit filed ahead of popular Puerto Rico street fair

Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico

(AP) — The American Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit Wednesday seeking a court injunction to block new security measures at this week's popular street festival in Puerto Rico's capital that draws hundreds of thousands of locals and tourists.

The lawsuit came a day before the San Sebastian festival begins in historic Old San Juan, where Mayor Carmen Yulin has ordered police for the first time to search everyone who attends. Officials have said there will be metal detectors and that people's bags and purses will be searched.

The ACLU called the searches unreasonable because they are not preceded by a judicial order or prompted by probable cause.

"The threat of violating the constitutional rights of hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans is imminent," the lawsuit states.

An estimated 500,000 people attended the festival last year, and many are wondering how the new security measures will be implemented on a crowd of that size.

Residents in Old San Juan also decried other security measures, including the installation this week of fences to block access to certain streets.

"By closing and blocking an access, you're also closing an exit," the Old San Juan Neighbors Association said in a statement, citing safety concerns.

Yulin met with ACLU officials before the lawsuit was filed, but she said the measures are needed.

"The security plan we created aims to protect life and property to the fullest during an event of this magnitude," she said.

Puerto Rico has struggled with violent crime in recent years, with a record 1,136 killings reported in 2011 on an island of 3.7 million people. Last year, a 32-year-old man was fatally shot at the crowded festival. □



Baseball players from the University of Tampa, left, greet players from the Cuban youth squad at the end of their exhibition game in Havana, Cuba, Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2014. The visitors scraped out a hard-fought win, but the encounter was more about bridging the vast gulf between these neighboring nations that disagree on just about everything except their shared love of the game. (AP Photo/Ramon Espinosa)

gulf between these neighboring nations that disagree on just about everything except their shared love of the game.

"Sports bring people together," Tampa Spartans head coach Joe Urso said. "And when you talk about the history of Tampa and the Cuban roots that we have in Tampa, to be able

base, a central park where islanders spend all day, every day, arguing passionately about baseball. Two Tampa players and a coach who are bilingual in English and Spanish translated.

"Watching them interact and talk about Cuban baseball and ask questions about American baseball

in favor of an umpire's strike calls and the crack of the bat.

The Cuban team was drawn from a youth academy that feeds the city's powerhouse Industriales club, and the Americans praised their talent. When a Cuban shortstop made a great diving grab on a line drive, the entire Tampa

Haiti:

Rights groups condemn pace in Baby Doc case

TRENTON DANIEL

Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— Two leading advocacy groups this week condemned the sluggish pace of a criminal case against former Haitian dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier.

Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International said in a joint statement that the ex-leader known as "Baby Doc" is escaping justice because of a "lack of politi-

cal will and unacceptable court delays."

A judge in 2012 ruled that Duvalier could be tried on charges of misappropriating public funds, but threw out human rights charges, saying the statute of limitations had expired. Duvalier is challenging the financial decision and the plaintiffs are appealing the ruling on human rights complaints.

The appeals court hearing the case heard testimony

last year from Duvalier and several victims, who described being tortured under the regime that lasted from 1971 to 1986.

Its decision has been on hold since May, pending unspecified procedural steps, the advocacy groups said, citing multiple sources.

"It appears that the Haitian authorities have no intention of carrying out thorough investigations into Du-

valier-era abuses," Javier Zuniga of Amnesty International said in the statement. President Michel Martelly once said he was open to pardoning Duvalier as part of a broader effort for national reconciliation. He has also said that it's up to Haiti's judiciary to handle the case.

The lead judge on the case, Jean-Joseph Lebrun, could not be immediately reached for comment. □



Loyal visitors honored at the Divi Phoenix Beach Resort!



PALM BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a group of loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba at the Divi Phoenix Beach Resort as Distinguished Visitors and Ambassadors of Goodwill. The symbolic

honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 10-to-19 and 20-or-more consecutive years. The honorees were Terry and Judi Wolf of Tappan, New York, Leonid and

Rachel Ostrovsky of Brooklyn, New York, Joel and Linda Scharf of Monroe Township, New Jersey, and John and Barbara Mason of Little Egg Harbor, New Jersey. All the honorees are loyal members of the Divi Phoenix and they love



Aruba very much because of the friendly people, the weather, the beaches, restaurants, and Casinos! They say that Aruba feels like a second home because the people are like family to them, and the

Divi Phoenix is their home away from home. The certificates were presented by Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Avril and Pedro Vargas representing the Divi Phoenix. □

Gerald and Lois Melane honored at the Tropicana Resort and Casino

PALM BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very special couple whom are loyal and friendly Visitors of Aruba, at the Tropicana Resort and Casino as Distinguished

Visitors. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 10-to-19 consecutive years. The honorees were Gerald



and Lois Melane from Davison, Michigan. Gerald and Lois are loyal members of the Tropicana Resort and they love Aruba very much because of the friendly people, the beaches, restaurants, great entertainment and being on Aruba and staying at the Tropicana is like being home for them. The certificates were presented by Ernest Giel

representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Brian Stedeford GM and Jacky Feliciano Assistant GM at the Tropicana Resort and Casino.

Honeymooners vow that Fishes & More Restaurant is in their hearts forever!



PALM BEACH - Honeymooners Ashley (29) and Johan Silva (30) are loving every minute of their honeymoon on Aruba. The first-time visitors chose a great time to come to the island, especially when one knows what the weather is like at home. The newlyweds were caught by the photographer having dinner at Fishes & More Restaurant in the Arawak Garden across from the Occidental Resort on the hi-rise strip. They were enjoying the spicy shrimp, calamari and the surf 'n turf, while holding hands and sneaking romantic glances at each

other. Asked how they came to choose Fishes & More they said that they found an ad in the Menu magazine, which lists a great number of restaurants on the island. Asked what their verdict was, Ashley and Johan did not hesitate for a sec and answered that they would recommend Fishes & More to everyone: they found the service amazing and the food fantastic. That's good to hear! We would like to wish these honeymooners a wonderful life together and many, many happy returns to Aruba to celebrate their wedding anniversaries! □

Beauty On The Beach

Daniela Runcio

She came all the way from Milan, Italy to enjoy her honeymoon in Aruba. She is staying at the Radisson Aruba Beach Resort, her favorite beaches in Aruba are the Arashi Beach and the Baby Beach



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Sharapova advances after another Aussie scorcher

JOHN PYE

AP Sports Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)

— Maria Sharapova was already soaking in ice by the time the extreme weather warning arrived.

It seemed bafflingly late to the four-time major winner, who felt fried after playing for 3½ hours in searing heat to reach the third round of the Australian Open. She didn't know it when she was out on Rod Laver Arena tangling with Karin Knapp on Thursday, but tournament organizers had finally conceded it was unsafe to keep players on court on the third consecutive day of what is shaping as a once-in-a-century heat wave.

Matches were suspended for four hours as temperatures topped 43 Celsius (109 Fahrenheit) before subsiding, but that didn't apply to Sharapova and Knapp because they were already into the third set and the Extreme Heat Policy only kicks in at the end of sets in progress.

Sharapova thinks it absurd that a vague formula for measuring ambient temperature, wind and humidity leaves the tournament



Maria Sharapova of Russia wraps an ice-towel around her head during a break in her second round match against Karin Knapp of Italy at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014. Temperatures are expected to top 44cC (112 F) during play today.

referee as the sole arbiter of extreme heat — without input from the players.

"We have never received any emails or, you know, warnings about the weather or what to do," she told a news conference an hour or so after her 6-3, 4-6, 10-8 win over Knapp. Then she recalled: "Actually, I did receive one, I think, while I was in the ice bath a few minutes ago — I was like, 'That's a little too late.'"

Not long after tournament director Craig Tiley appeared outdoors in a TV interview, dressed in jacket and tie, to explain how the decisions are reached, Sharapova said organizers should be telling the tour trainers, medical staff, officials and players so that everyone is in the loop.

The only matches that continued in the afternoon were on the two main show courts under closed roofs, which in hindsight was a good thing when the lightning and rain arrived later in the evening to again delay matches on outside courts. It is Melbourne, after all.

Continued on Page 22

Associated Press

Roma leads Dakar Rally under team orders

EL SALVADOR, Chile (AP) —

Nani Roma of Spain looks set to win the Dakar Rally after his X-raid team bosses told all four of their leading cars to freeze their positions to the finish on Saturday.

The race was set up for a thrilling finish as two-time defending champion Stephane Peterhansel of France slashed Roma's overall lead from 39 minutes last Thursday to just two minutes entering the

marathon 11th stage through the Atacama Desert on Thursday.

But Peterhansel and third-place Nasser Al-Attiyah, the 2011 champ, confirmed on arrival in El Salvador that X-raid told them to ease off and hold their positions.

X-raid drivers fill the top four — Orlando Terranova of Argentina, the stage winner on Thursday, was fourth — and seven of the top 10.

"The game is over. Yes-

terday evening, the team asked us to not take any more risks," Peterhansel said.

"It's a bit frustrating because we've done most of the hard work. But, if Mini wants to have three cars on the podium, at the speed at which we are driving out in front, it's easy to crash a car or even two in just one day.

Continued on Page 21



Driver Stephane Peterhansel of France adjusts his helmet at the start of the second special of the tenth stage of the Dakar Rally between the cities of Iquique and Antofagasta, Chile, Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2014.

Associated Press

Nets win again in London, beat Hawks 127-110

CHRIS LEHOURITES, AP Sports Writer

LONDON (AP) — The Brooklyn Nets should think about making another franchise move — to London.

The Nets improved to 3-0 in regular-season NBA games in the British capital with a 127-110 win over the Atlanta Hawks on Thursday.

Joe Johnson, who spent seven years with the Hawks, led the way for the Nets at the O2 Arena. The Brooklyn guard scored 26 of his game-high 29 points in the first half, and nailed two buzzer-beating 3-pointers. "We just exploited mismatches. I was just feeding off these guys," Johnson said. "We had a lot of ball movement and took a lot of open shots."

Three years ago, the then-New Jersey Nets played two regular-season games at the same O2 Arena, located on the banks of the River Thames and the venue used for the gold medal basketball game at the 2012 London Olympics. They beat the Raptors in both those games.

Last year, the New York Knicks beat the Detroit Pistons in the third regular-season game to be played in London.

Although the crowd seemed to save its loudest cheers for off-the-court action, both teams finished the game with five players scoring in double digits.

Andray Blatche added 20 points and 14 rebounds for the Nets, while Paul Pierce contributed 18 points, Alan Anderson 15 and Kevin Garnett 12.

"The ball was moving, guys were looking for each other and finding each other," Nets coach Jason Kidd said. "Joe has been off the charts. Not just last few games but the whole season."

Mike Scott and Shelvin Mack, both coming off the bench, led the Hawks with 17 points each. Jeff Teague scored 16 points, Paul Millsap had 13 and Pero Antic 11.

The Hawks stayed close

for the first quarter, but the Nets started to pull away in the second. Anderson started an 8-0 run early in the quarter, with Pierce contributing two layups and Blatche finishing it off with a putback to make it 39-30.

"Their size and their length was a problem in a lot of different ways, and rebounding was just one of them," Hawks coach Mike Budenholzer said.

Johnson ended the half with a 3-pointer at the buzzer to make it 65-53. And the Nets pulled further away in the third quarter, with Johnson again finishing it off with a buzzer-beating 3 to make it 99-74. Although his scoring numbers dropped in the second half, Johnson has now scored 20 or more points in four straight games.

"We've got the best seat in the house," Garnett said of watching Johnson put up big numbers. "When you're so used to being in that situation yourself, it's great to have a guy who can just take over the game."

On the other end, Hawks guard Kyle Korver extended his NBA record to 108 straight games with a 3-pointer.

Korver was off-target in the first three quarters and finally sank his eighth attempt from beyond the arc with just over 8 minutes to go, making it 111-81. That was his only basket of the night.

"To give him an opportunity to continue something that's very unique and special is important," Budenholzer said. "At some point the streak will come to an end, but it wasn't tonight." Both teams play again on Monday. The Nets visit the New York Knicks while the Hawks host Miami.

Besides the game, the fans oftentimes cheered wildly for the entertainment between quarters and timeouts, and for one famous guest.

During a break in the third quarter, the face of Beatles great Paul Mc-

Cartney flashed up on the big screen. As the crowd roared, several kids nearby jumped into the frame to make themselves seen. McCartney, sitting behind the Nets' bench, then squirmed his way through the youngsters to get his face back up on the giant monitor as "Hey Jude" blared inside the venue.

In Tuesday night's NBA games it was Washington 114, Miami 97; Chicago 128, Orlando 125 in 3 OTS; L.A. Clippers 129, Dallas 127; Denver 123, Golden State 116; Portland 108, Cleveland 96; Houston 103, New Orleans 100; Memphis 82, Milwaukee 77; San Antonio 109, Utah 105; Phoenix 121, L.A. Lak-



Atlanta Hawks' Dennis Schroder, right, competes for the ball with Brooklyn Nets' Paul Pierce during an NBA basketball game at the O2 Arena in London, Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014.

ers 114; Philadelphia 95, 111, Minnesota 108; and Charlotte 92; Sacramento Boston 88, Toronto 83. □

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Rodriguez says suspension could be a plus

CARLOS RODRIGUEZ

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Alex Rodriguez says his season-long suspension could be a benefit, allowing him to rest and return to the New York Yankees for the final three years of his contract. Speaking late Wednesday in Mexico's capital during a promotional appearance, Rodriguez declined to talk specifically about his doping suspension. Rodriguez, in his first public comments since arbitrator Fredric Horowitz's decision on Saturday, said he wanted to end his career with New York. Yankees managing general partner Hal Steinbrenner has declined to talk about his possible return but has called him a "great player."

"The 2014 season could be a big help for me," Rodriguez said. "It might serve as a break and close the chapter, and begin in 2015 with my last three years under contract with the



In this Aug. 25, 2013 file photo, New York Yankees' Alex Rodriguez watches from the dugout during the first inning of a baseball game against the Tampa Bay Rays in St. Petersburg, Fla. **Associated Press**

Yankees." Rodriguez, who will be 39 when the 2015 season opens, repeated several times that this part of his life had not been completed.

"I want to retire in New York,

and I think the rest will do me good," the third baseman added. "For me, the book isn't finished. There are still chapters to finish. ... Right now I haven't thought about retiring."

Rodriguez, fifth on the Major League Baseball career list with 654 homers sued MLB and the players' union on Monday in an effort to overturn the decision by Horowitz, who reduced what originally was a 211-game suspension issued by the league in August. "This process has been taxing both mentally and physically throughout the past eight months," Ron Berkowitz, a spokesman for Rodriguez, said in a statement on Thursday. "Alex will abide by the rulings of the federal judge — whatever he decides — and get ready for 2015 should the judge rule against him. He will continue to move forward with his complaint which will help all players against this unfair system."

Also speaking late Wednesday,

Yankees captain Derek Jeter said he was saddened by the situation.

"The whole situation is bad," Jeter said at his Turn 2 Foundation golf classic in Tampa, Florida. "The whole thing has been kind of messy."

Jeter has been in communication with Rodriguez, but declined to say what was discussed.

"I'm sure it's a rough situation," Jeter said.

Hall of Famer Goose Gossage attended Jeter's event and called the Rodriguez matter unfortunate for the game and everyone involved.

"I wish A-Rod would just leave it alone and go on," Gossage said. "Then see about coming back. Who knows what the future holds for A-Rod and the Yankees? I think A-Rod, probably, got what he deserved. I hate to see it happen to him, but I think the punishment fits the crime." □



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Ducks blast Canucks 9-1 for 8th straight win

ANAHEIM, California (AP) — Corey Perry had two goals and two assists, Teemu Selanne had two goals and an assist, and the relentless Anaheim Ducks beat the Vancouver Canucks 9-1 Wednesday night for their 18th victory in 19 games. NHL Capsules Nick Bonino scored also two goals for the NHL-leading Ducks, who earned their eighth consecutive victory by scoring a club-record six power-play goals in the highest-scoring performance in the franchise's two-decade history. Andrew Coglian, Jakob Silfverberg and Sami Vatanen also scored, and Frederik Andersen made 31 saves as Anaheim joined the 1967-68 Montreal Canadiens as the only teams in league history to win 18 times in a 19-game span. Zack Kassian scored for the Canucks, who picked up 58 penalty minutes in the third period of their seventh loss in eight games.

PENGUINS 4, CAPITALS 3 PITTSBURGH (AP) — Olli Maatta's slap shot beat Michal Neuvirth with less than 2 minutes remaining to rally Pittsburgh for the victory against Washington. Maatta's fourth goal of the season gave Pittsburgh its only lead as the Penguins won their 13th straight home game, a club record. Jussi Jokinen, Taylor Pyatt and Kris Letang also scored for the Penguins. Marc-Andre Fleury stopped 25 shots to pick up his NHL-leading 27th victory. Alexander Ovechkin's 34th goal of the season gave Washington a 3-2 lead midway through the third period, but the Capitals collapsed over the final 10 minutes. Brooks Laich and Jason Chimera also scored for Washington, which lost for the seventh time in nine games. Neuvirth made 33 stops, but didn't see Maatta's blast

from the point with 1:54 left. MAPLE LEAFS 4, SABRES 3, SO TORONTO (AP) — Tyler Bozak scored the clinching goal in the third round of the shootout and Toronto won its third straight by beating Buffalo. James van Riemsdyk, Joffrey Lupul and Bozak scored in the shootout for Toronto. Matt Moulson scored in the first round for Buffalo, but James Reimer stopped Cody Hodgson after Lupul tallied in the second, setting up Bozak's winner. Phil Kessel, Nikolai Kulemin and Morgan Rielly scored in regulation for the Leafs, while Matt Ellis, Moulson and Hodgson had goals for the Sabres. Toronto earned its league-leading ninth shootout victory in its 13th shootout. Reimer stopped 27 shots in regulation and overtime, while U.S. Olympic goaltender Ryan Miller made 36 saves for the Sabres. □



Pittsburgh Penguins' Evgeni Malkin (71) collides with Washington Capitals goalie Michal Neuvirth (30) after being tripped by Capitals' Mike Green (52) in the third period of an NHL hockey game in Pittsburgh, Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2014. The Penguins won 4-3. Associated Press

Roma leads Dakar

Continued from Page 18

We know that this (freezing the positions) can happen, but I didn't think that they would do it." Roma denied there were any team orders. Al-Attiyah led for much of the 605-kilometer leg, until with about 70 kilometers to go he hit a stone and was delayed for 20 minutes. Teranova came through for his second stage win of the race, 11 minutes ahead of Roma. Giniel de Villiers of South Africa, the runner-up last year, was third despite three punctures, and fifth overall and 20 minutes off a podium place. Peterhansel was fourth. Roma ended five successive stages of losing time to Peterhansel by increasing his overall lead to more

than five minutes, which would hardly be anything in terms of the race if the leaders were racing. Al-Attiyah was 56 minutes back in third. The motorbike race was virtually over with Marc Coma winning his third stage to extend his overall lead to 52 minutes over Joan Barreda Bort, who broke his navigation system in a crash and rode the last half relying on trails. A third Spaniard, Jordi Viladoms, was fourth on the stage, and third overall, more than two hours off the pace. Coma, who fell early, and titleholder Cyril Despres led throughout the stage. Despres, out of the running for more than a week, still



Driver Stephane Peterhansel of France adjusts his helmet at the start of the second special of the tenth stage of the Dakar Rally between the cities of Iquique and Antofagasta, Chile, Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2014.

Associated Press

holds hope of making the podium, being 24 minutes off third place. He has one more challenging stage left to make a move, the 350-kilometer 12th through more dunes and desert south to La Serena. □

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Mickelson 6 shots behind in Abu Dhabi

BERNIE McGUIRE

Associated Press

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Phil Mickelson didn't have much success with his new driver in the first round of the Abu Dhabi HSBC Golf Championship, failing to make a single birdie in a 1-over 73 to sit six shots behind the leaders.

Mickelson made 17 straight pars in his first round of the year before a bogey on his last hole, joining a number of big names who struggled on the opening day. "I can't recall the last time I had a round without a birdie," Mickelson said. "But didn't make a bogey there until the last."

Matthew Baldwin of England was tied for the lead with Romain Wattel of France and Rafa Cabrera-Bello after a 67. Seven players, including European Ryder Cup captain Paul McGinley, were one shot behind.

Mickelson's playing partner Rory McIlroy carded a 70 while Henrik Stenson had four bogeys in a 74 and Sergio Garcia com-



Phil Mickelson of the U.S. follows his ball on the 2nd hole during the 1st round of the Abu Dhabi HSBC Golf Championship in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014.

Associated Press

plained about the rough being "dangerous" after a 76.

Mickelson said before the event that he was driving better than ever after getting a new driver from Callaway Golf that he said could turn one of his weaknesses into a strength.

However, he only hit five of 14 fairways on the Peter Harradine-designed course.

"This first round, I was a little tentative, played a little cautious, didn't trust my swing too much," Mickelson said. "I haven't been out in competition for a

while but then it was good to get my feet wet."

McIlroy was upbeat after showing signs of the same form he displayed at the end of the 2013 season, which earned him the victory in last month's Australian Open in Sydney.

"I feel the benefit of end-

ing last year well and then starting off this year with a lot of hard work, it's sort of showed off," McIlroy said. "Today was my first competitive round since the start of December, and I drove the ball as well as I have done in a long time." Martin Kaymer, a three-time winner in Abu Dhabi had a costly double bogey on the 14th and also finished with a 70.

Garcia said he hurt his shoulder while playing the Pro-Am on Wednesday, and said he was troubled by the thick rough — needing treatment on his 13th hole.

Garcia said the rough is "very, very thick," and that "they have cut it from green back to the tee, and by doing that the ball nestles' down quite a bit."

"You just have to hit it so hard into the ground to get it out and when you're not 100 percent it doesn't help at all," Garcia said. "I would say that it's dangerous and hopefully nobody else will get injured because it could happen to several guys this week." □

Sharapova advances

Continued from Page 18

Top-ranked Rafael Nadal was pleased to avoid the heat, and the lightning, and the temperatures had dropped when two-time defending champion Victoria Azarenka and Wimbledon champion Andy Murray won the featured women's and men's night matches on the center court.

Roger Federer was content to find his way out to a secondary court at Melbourne Park for the first time in a decade so that he could play under the roof on Hisense Arena. He and Nadal played at roughly the same time, also a rarity here, and won in three sets. Others advancing on the men's side included 2008 finalist Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, No. 11 Milos Raonic, No. 22

Grigor Dimitrov and American Donald Young, who beat No. 24 Andreas Seppi of Italy 6-4, 2-6, 6-3, 4-6, 7-5. No. 5-ranked Juan Martin del Potro, the 2009 U.S. Open champion, didn't like the late finish. His run as an outside contender to the 'Big Four' ended in a shocking 4-6, 6-3, 5-7, 6-4, 7-5 defeat to Spain's Roberto Bautista Agut at 1:20 a.m. Friday.

The women playing the early matches experienced the worst of the heat Thursday, with No. 11 Simona Halep winning all but one game in the last two sets against American Varvara Lepchenko, who needed treatment and said she was almost delirious. No. 5 Agnieszka Radwanska, No. 8 Jelena Jankovic and No. 13 Sloane Stephens advanced in the relative cool of the evening.

The temperatures were forecast to reach 44 C (111



Juan Martin del Potro of Argentina makes a backhand return to Roberto Bautista Agut of Spain during his second round match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014.

Associated Press

F) on day five. No. 1-ranked Serena Williams was playing the opening match on Rod Laver Arena on Friday against Daniella Hantuchova, and three-time defending champion No-

vak Djokovic was playing a night match, when temperatures were expected to drastically drop ahead of the weekend.

The scorching heat has been the talking point all

week in Melbourne. Others have described the decision not to suspend matches earlier in temperatures regularly topping 42 C (108 F) as inhumane.

No. 25-seeded Alize Cornet, who plays Sharapova next, sobbed on court after her second-round win, saying "It was an oven. It was burning."

Murray said it was difficult for everyone involved.

"It's not a good place to be in because the heat is bearable — just," he said, adding that the stakeholders needed to discuss the heat rules and make them easier to understand.

"But let's also remember this is the first time it's ever been like this," he said. "I heard it was 100 years they've never had weather like this four days in a row. So you've got to expect that's probably not going to happen again for a while." □

Sacramento Kings to accept Bitcoin for purchases



Sacramento Kings' Rudy Gay slams in two points in the first quarter of an NBA basketball game against the Minnesota Timberwolves, Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2014, in Minneapolis. Gay led the Kings with 33 points in their 111-108 win.

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, California (AP) — The Sacramento Kings are set to become the first major U.S. professional sports team to accept Bitcoin virtual currency for ticket and merchandise purchases. The Kings announced on Thursday that fans will be able to buy gear from the official team store and pay for tickets with the digital money from March 1. Purchases will be processed through BitPay, which accepts the digital dollars and pays the

Kings in cash. Bitcoin users buy digital money and load it onto a virtual wallet. Unlike government-issued money, the value of Bitcoin fluctuates rapidly. At one point on Thursday, the value of one Bitcoin was worth nearly \$850. Kings owner Vivek Ranadive said the new payment method is part of his model for "NBA 3.0, which focuses on investments in technology, globalization and deep community partnerships." □

California motorist cleared in Google Glass driving case

By JULIE WATSON
Associated Press Writer

SAN DIEGO (AP) — A San Diego traffic court threw out a citation Thursday against a woman who authorities said was driving while wearing the Google Glass computer-in-eyeglass device.

Commissioner John Blair ruled that Cecilia Abadie was not guilty because the code she was cited for requires proof that the device was in operation. Blair found there was no proof beyond a reasonable doubt.

Abadie is believed to be the first motorist cited for wearing Google Glass while driving. She was also found not guilty of speeding.

Abadie, a software developer, is among some 30,000 people called "explorers" who have been selected to try out Google Glass before the technology becomes widely available to the public later this year.

The device on a kind of glass-wear frame features a thumbnail-size transparent display above the right eye.

Abadie was pulled over in October on a San Diego freeway. The California



Cecilia Abadie wears her Google Glass as she talks with her attorney outside of traffic court in this Dec. 3, 2013 file photo taken in San Diego.
Associated Press

Highway Patrol officer saw she was wearing Google Glass and tacked on a citation usually given to people driving while a video or TV screen is on in the front of their vehicle.

Abadie had pleaded not guilty to both charges in San Diego traffic court. Her attorney William Conidine previously said the device was not activated when she was driving.

The CHP previously declined comment. At the time of Abadie's citation, the agency said anything that takes a driver's attention from the road is dangerous.

The lightweight frames are equipped with a hidden

camera and tiny display that responds to voice commands. The technology can be used to do things such as check email, learn background about something the wearer is looking at, or to get driving directions.

Legislators in at least three states - Delaware, New Jersey and West Virginia - have introduced bills that would ban driving with Google Glass.

Google's website contains an advisory for users: "Read up and follow the law. Above all, even when you're following the law, don't hurt yourself or others by failing to pay attention to the road." □

Facebook adds trending topics to site

BARBARA ORTUTAY
AP Technology Writer

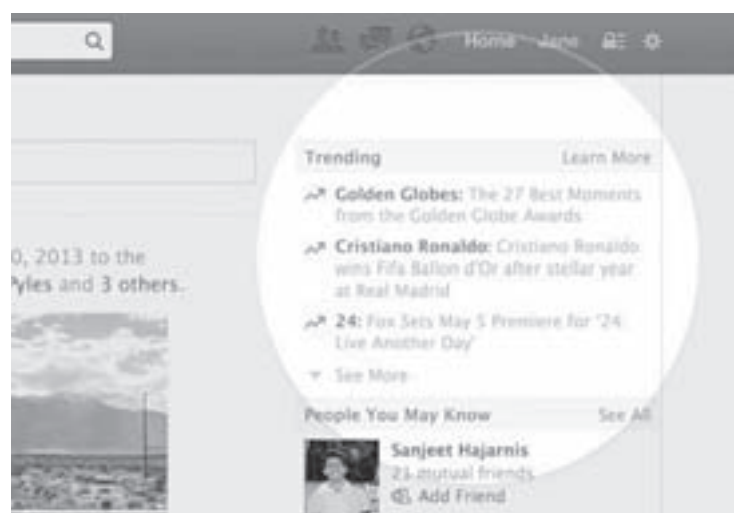
NEW YORK (AP) — In a move that echoes Twitter, Facebook is adding a feature to its service that lets users know the topics of discussion that are trending among the site's 1.2 billion users, whether it's the death of a world leader or the Oscars.

Users in the U.S., U.K., India, Canada and Australia will begin seeing a list of trending topics on the right side of their Facebook pages in coming weeks. It will be available in more countries later on. Trending topics won't be available on the mobile version of Facebook, but the company said it is testing the feature in its app for smartphones

and tablet computers.

Facebook, which signaled last year that it would introduce trending topics at some point, said Thursday that the topics people see will be tailored to the user's interests and location. On Thursday afternoon, two users saw topics that included the Academy Awards, American Idol and Republican Sen. David Vitter from Louisiana.

Unlike Twitter, which simply lists topics, Facebook's trending section explains why a particular topic is trending. In this case, the 2014 Academy Award nominations were announced, American Idol named new judges and promised a new attitude and Vitter introduced a



bill that would require people show photo IDs to make purchases with food stamps.

Chris Stuhar, a software engineer at Facebook who works on the site's news feed, said the feature is designed to uncover the most

interesting content across the site and fits into the company's broader effort to make Facebook "your personal newspaper."

Facebook is already seen as a place where users go to find out what their friends and family are up

to. Stuhar said learning that a friend got married or discovering what his friends are doing on a Friday night is "certainly news," but Facebook has a "much broader vision of where we want news feed to go in the future."

Facebook's new feature represents another move onto Twitter's turf. Right now, Twitter is seen as the place people go to have public conversations about events as they happen, whether that's live TV, sports or news. Mirroring Twitter, Instagram and other services, Facebook in June introduced hashtags, the number signs that identify topics being discussed and that allow users to search for them. □

Carlyle Group makes \$4.15B offer for J&J business

LINDA A. JOHNSON

AP Business Writer

TRENTON, New Jersey (AP)

— Johnson & Johnson said Thursday that it's been offered \$4.15 billion by The Carlyle Group for its Ortho-Clinical Diagnostics business, a year after J&J began reviewing strategic options for the blood-testing unit as part of a routine pruning of its extensive family of businesses.

J&J, based in New Brunswick, New Jersey, has until March 31 to decide whether to accept the offer. Johnson & Johnson executives plan to discuss the offer Tuesday, when the health giant and con-

sumer products company reports fourth-quarter results. The company said Thursday that it will consult with works councils and trade unions representing the unit's employees before making a decision.

The Ortho-Clinical business serves hospitals, testing laboratories and blood banks. One division supplies equipment and chemicals to screen donated blood for HIV, hepatitis C and other serious diseases, and for typing donated blood to ensure patients get safe, compatible blood transfusions. The other division makes technology for advanced test-

ing of blood to diagnose a range of health conditions and to monitor the effects of medication.

Established in 1937, Ortho Clinical Diagnostics is based in Raritan, New Jersey, and has factories in Rochester, New York; Pompano Beach, Florida, and Pencoed, Wales. It has more than 4,500 employees and operates in more than 30 countries worldwide. Last January, CEO Alex Gorsky said J&J was looking at strategic options for Ortho-Clinical Diagnostics, which doesn't meet the company's long-held strategy of focusing on businesses that rank first

or second in their markets. In 2012, J&J reported revenue of \$2.1 billion for the diagnostics business, down more than 4 percent from 2011. Revenue fell even more over the first nine months of 2013, when it was down 8 percent from the prior year at \$1.42 billion. Carlyle Group is a private equity and buyout firm based in Washington, D.C. If the sale goes through, Carlyle is expected to try to expand the business through increased marketing and creation of new products. Carlyle manages more than \$185 billion worth of assets worldwide, according to its website. □

Best Buy co. reports bleak holiday sales

ELIZABETH A. HARRIS

© 2014 New York Times

Best Buy announced disappointing holiday results Thursday, saying that intense price competition cut into the company's revenues.

Revenue was \$11.45 billion, during the nine-week period that ended Jan. 4. That was down from \$11.75 billion during the holiday period last year, which ended Jan. 5.

"When we entered the holiday season, we said that price competitiveness was table stakes and an intensely promotional holiday season is what unfolded," Hubert Joly, Best Buy's chief executive, said in a statement. "The promotional intensity that began with Black Friday continued throughout the period, which led us and our competitors to answer one question: Do we make the incremental investment necessary to be price competitive and defend our market share? For us, there was only one answer." The results are weighing on the stock. Best Buy stock was down more than 27 percent early Thursday.

Best Buy is just the latest company to release disappointing holiday results. Many companies saw little to no growth last year and have lowered their profit forecast. Holiday earnings from some companies, especially Sears Holdings, have been dire. Sears reported that sales at its U.S. locations dropped 9.2 percent over the same period the year before.

At Best Buy, Joly said holiday revenues were hurt by a variety of factors, including a highly competitive market with significant discounts, a period of slow customer traffic, a "disappointing" mobile phone market and a limited supply of certain products. The Xbox One and PlayStation 4 game consoles were released for the holiday season, but many stores had trouble keeping them in stock, according to analysts. □

Weak earnings drag US stocks mostly lower

KEN SWEET

AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP)

— A batch of negative company news gave investors something to fret over Thursday. A day after eking out its first record high of 2014, the stock lost ground Thursday as electronics retailer Best Buy, Goldman Sachs and Citigroup, and railroad CSX had disappointing earnings news.

Consumer discretionary companies and banks fell the most.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index slipped 2.49 points, or 0.1 percent, to 1,845.89 — retreating from the all-time high it hit the day before.

Best Buy fell the most in the S&P 500 index after the company reported a decline in sales during the crucial holiday season. Its shares plunged \$10.74, or 29 percent, to \$26.83.

Investors had high hopes that Best Buy, which has faced intense competition from companies like Amazon.com, would put itself back on track. The stock soared 236 percent last year. However, the company said Thursday that the aggressive price-matching policy it offered during the holidays backfired and sales fell 0.8 percent compared to a year ago.

Best Buy is not the only retailer to disappoint investors the last week.

Bed Bath & Beyond, Family Dollar and Target all cut their full-year outlooks last week after a weak holiday season. The only bright spot in the retail industry was Macy's, and even it

falling \$3.58, or 2 percent, to \$175.17.

The bank reported a drop in fourth-quarter profit due to problems in its mortgages and bond trading division. However, Goldman's

Harriman.

"If something were to go wrong, like if this earnings season continues to disappoint, I think any negative market reaction would be magnified," Clemons said.



Specialist Jason Notter, left, works with traders at the post that handles BlackRock, on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014. Retailers and railroad operators were among the biggest decliners in trading on the stock market as investors reacted to weak earnings reports.
(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

announced layoffs of 2,500 employees as part of a restructuring.

The Dow Jones industrial average fell 64.93 points, or 0.4 percent, to 16,417.01. The Nasdaq composite had a modest gain of 3.8 points, or 0.1 percent, to 4,218.69.

Goldman Sachs was the biggest drag on the Dow,

earnings did beat analysts' expectations.

The bond and mortgage businesses were also weak at Citigroup, whose results fell short of expectations. The stock dropped \$2.39, or 4 percent, to \$52.60.

The stock market is "fragile" right now, said Scott Clemons, chief investment strategist at Brown Brothers

"The market is not as resilient as it was last year."

The company disappointments were not limited to the retailers and banks.

The railroad company CSX warned investors that it might be difficult to reach its own profit targets over the next two years because of ongoing weak demand for coal. □

Goldman Sachs says 4Q profit falls 21 percent

The Associated Press
Goldman Sachs reported Thursday that its fourth-quarter profit dropped 21 percent as revenue from mortgages and trading in bonds and other securities weakened.

The Wall Street bank earned \$2.25 billion in the October-December quarter after paying dividends

on preferred shares, down from \$2.83 billion in the same period a year earlier. That worked out to \$4.60 per share, down from \$5.60 per share a year earlier. The results were well above the earnings of \$4.18 per share analysts were expecting. Revenue slipped 5 percent to \$8.78 billion, but exceeded analysts' forecast of

\$7.72 billion.

It was the first year-on-year decline in earnings at Goldman Sachs since the second quarter of 2012, when income fell 12 percent to \$927 million.

Recent weakness in trading of bonds, currencies and commodities has depressed earnings at Goldman.

Goldman's CEO Lloyd Blankfein said in a prepared statement that the company has worked to keep costs down "to provide solid returns even in a somewhat challenging environment."

The decline came despite a 22 percent jump in earnings in Goldman's investment banking business in

the fourth quarter, to \$1.72 billion.

Blankfein said improving prospects for the U.S. economy will help the company turn in strong results this year.

Goldman maintained its quarterly dividend at 55 cents. Its stock fell \$4.18, or 2.3 percent, to \$174.57 in afternoon trading.

CSX warns it will be harder to hit profit targets

JOSH FUNK
AP Business Writer

OMAHA, Nebraska (AP) — CSX warned that it will be

of ongoing weakness in demand for coal and because last year's results included several large, but

age payments from utilities that didn't ship enough coal under their contracts. Waning coal demand has

ports declining as Europe's economy struggles.

Chief Financial Officer Fredrik Eliasson said Thursday that those factors will make it more difficult to deliver on CSX's projected 10 percent to 15 percent growth in earnings per share from 2013 through 2015.

The company's fourth-quarter earnings declined 5 percent to \$426 million on \$3 billion revenue, which was short of Wall Street expectations.

Company shares fell more than 7 percent to \$27.11 in afternoon trading.

Once coal shipments stabilize at the new lower level and CSX gets past last year's one-time real estate sales later this year, its results should improve.

"We think we've got another year of transition ahead," said Chairman and CEO Michael Ward.

Stifel Nicolaus stripped the company of its 'buy' rating Thursday and sees little in the way of potential returns over the next year.

"It is our hope that, some-

time during the remainder of 2014, we will see a more attractive entry point for those wishing to establish positions or add to current positions in the company's common shares," wrote analyst John Larkin.

Citi's Christian Wetherbee backed his 'neutral' rating for the stock. He pointed to fourth-quarter growth rates that were basically in line with expectations and attributed the lighter net income to higher expenses.

CSX remains optimistic about its long-term prospects, citing the growth in shipments of intermodal shipping containers, building materials, and crude oil. The company, based in Jacksonville, Florida, expects growth this year at a rate of between 2.7 percent and 3 percent. CSX predicts that total shipping volume should continue to grow in the current quarter. The health of railroads, given the reliance of companies ranging from automotive to lumber and energy, can serve as an indicator of the broader U.S. economy.



A CSX train passes through New Scotland, N.Y. CSX warned Thursday, Jan. 16, 2015, that it will be more difficult to reach its own profit targets for double-digit growth over the next two years because of ongoing weakness in demand for coal and because last year's results included several large, but one-time benefits.

(AP Photo/Mike Groll)

more difficult to reach its own profit targets for double-digit growth over the next two years because

one-time benefits.

The railroad last year booked gains from real estate sales, as well as dam-

gone on for longer than was expected, with so many utilities switching to natural gas and coal ex-

Citigroup's 4Q profit misses analysts' forecasts

STEVE ROTHWELL
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Citigroup's fourth-quarter profit fell short of analysts' expectations as its bond and mortgage businesses weakened.

The bank said Thursday it earned \$2.60 billion, after stripping out the effects of an accounting charge. Per share, that amounted to 82 cents, falling short of the 95

cents that analysts expected.

Citi's stock fell nearly 4 percent in late morning trading.

Revenue, excluding adjustments, slipped 2 percent to \$17.9 billion, short of the \$18.2 billion Wall Street predicted.

"Although we didn't finish the year as strongly as we would have liked, we made substantial progress

toward our key priorities in 2013," said Michael Corbat, Citigroup's CEO said in a statement.

The bank logged its most profitable year since 2006, before the financial crisis.

JPMorgan Chase and Wells Fargo and Bank of America, Citi saw its mortgage business decline as refinancing slowed. Revenue at the bank's consumer division fell 5 percent to \$9.47

billion. Over the summer, mortgage rates started to rise, stopping many consumers from refinancing their home loans.

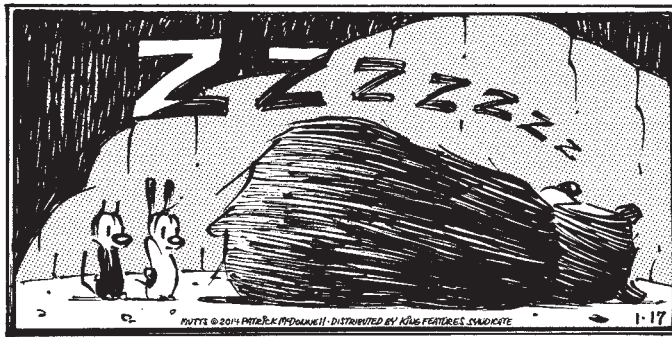
"What we want to do is to focus the mortgage business on serving our retail business clients," said John Gerspach, Citi's Chief Financial Officer. "We're going to be smaller than some of the other competitors."

Revenue at Citi's bond

business also slumped, dropping 15 percent to \$2.33 billion. Much of the decline was due to a drop in demand for the bank's structured credit products, Gerspach said.

Citi's operating costs fell 6 percent to \$11.9 billion in the period. Revenues at Citi's investment banking unit also improved, driven by more mergers and acquisition business.

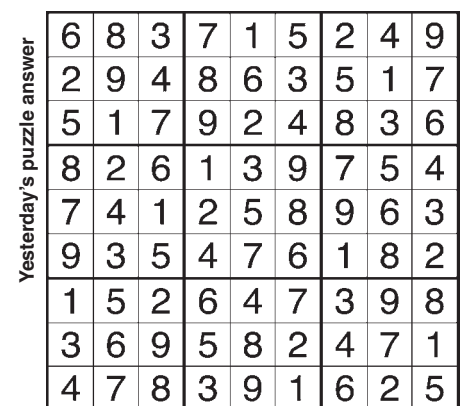
Conceptis Sudoku



		5					6	
			9		8		2	1
1				4				
	9				7		3	
		3		9		7		
	7		6				5	
				5				2
7	4		1		2			
	2					8		

1/17

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.



I'VE GOT BAD NEWS, MR. BUMSTEAD! MECHANICAL PROBLEMS HAVE US SHUT DOWN FOR THE DAY

OH, NO! I'VE GOT A BLACK-TIE DINNER TONIGHT!

Fashion
CLEANERS



MY PARENTS ARE ON A NEW BUDGET.

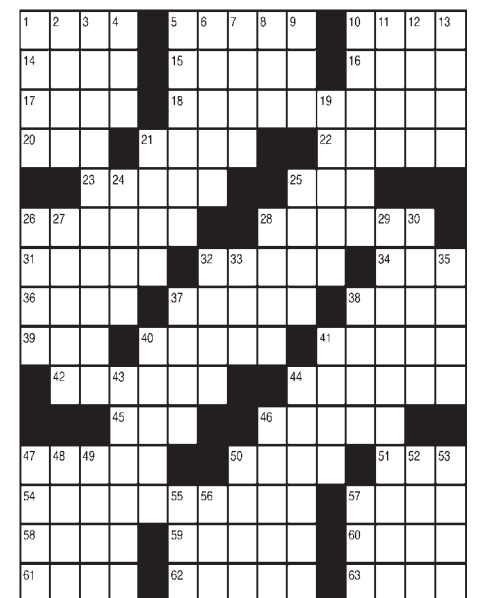
UH-OH.

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1 Bundle of hay
5 Juice flavor
10 Arrange in advance
14 Press, as clothing
15 Nonconformist
16 Overdue
17 ___ a hand to; assist
18 Exceed in importance
20 Remain behind
21 "Oh, for crying out ___!"
22 Cairo's nation
23 Forgo a right voluntarily
25 Plato's "T"
26 Expensive
28 Most unusual
31 ___ and raves; carries on
32 Berate
34 Light brown
36 Chances
37 ___-trotter; world traveler
38 Create
39 Go to Kingdom Come
40 Mounds
41 Angers
42 Bizarre one of a kind
44 Woods
45 Koch & Asner
46 Tribal pole
47 Accuse
50 Get up
51 Pompous fool
54 One who signs up
57 ___ sign; red octagon
58 Arden & Plumb
59 Door hanger's metal piece
60 Sorrowful drop
61 Expansive
62 Tool for cutting a lawn's border
63 Catch sight of

DOWN
1 Invoice
2 Zone



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

1/17/14

3 Like a
motormouth

4 In the ____;
ultimately

5 "Cool!" to teens
of the 1970s

6 Theater medley

7 Not up yet

8 ____ person;
apiece

9 Rail systems, in
some cities

10 Deadly
epidemic

11 Woman

12 Sitting on

13 Mr. Gingrich

L	I	Z		S	C	R	E	W		F	O	I	L		
O	B	E	Y		C	L	O	V	E	R		R	I	S	
W	I	S	E		H	A	T	E	S		I	L	L	S	
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				R	O	M	P			W	I	N			
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	D	O	N	S		S	T	Y	L	E		S	K	A	

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17/14

35 Home of twigs	47 Make tea
37 Understands	48 Mr. Strauss
38 Deep thick mud	49 Like fine wine
40 Conceals	50 Pealed
41 Learn by __;	52 Daytime serial
memorize	53 Lively; agile
43 Death	55 Definite article
44 Actress Jodie	56 __ of; free from
46 Slight coloring	57 Sault . Marie

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weeks 7 & 8 fri-fri
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Endangered turtles face new threat in Indonesia

MARGIE MASON
Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)

— Green sea turtles remain a rare sight in many parts of the world, but one Indonesian island tasked with protecting them is being overrun by far too many. New research suggests that the gentle endangered creatures are crowding into a marine reserve in numbers never recorded anywhere, gobbling seagrass to the point that they risk destroying the food source that's vital to their survival. Up to 20 turtles were spotted in an area covering about two U.S. football fields (one hectare) at Derawan Island off Indonesia's part of Borneo in 2011. That means snorkelers are almost guaranteed to see a turtle every moment they're in the water. The rate was four times higher than non-protected areas elsewhere and also topped historic numbers reported before the reptile was hunted by humans. The graceful creatures with heart-shaped shells usually just munch on seagrass

much like cows grazing in a field. But the increasing population has pushed them to desperation: With no top leaves left, they now claw at the plants with



This undated photo taken by Marjolijn Christianen of the Radboud University of Nijmegen and released by University of Queensland, shows a green turtle at the bottom of the sea in the waters off Derawan Island, East Kalimantan, Indonesia.

Associated Press

their flippers and use their mouths to violently rip the seagrass out by the roots, leaving patches of white sandy ocean floor. Such behavior has not been seen elsewhere, according to findings published last week in the journal *Proceedings of the Royal Soci-*

ety B. They are "creating sort of piles of mud in the seagrass bed where they've eaten the underlying root matter, and it can take a hell of a

long time for that to come back," said co-author Peter Mumby, a marine ecologist at the University of Queensland in Australia. "So essentially, they're going to eat themselves out of house and home." Using modeling, the research team, led from 2008

to 2011 by Marjolijn Christianen of Radboud University Nijmegen in the Netherlands, found that nearly all turtles would need to be removed from the area in order for the seagrass to recover. If they are not stopped, the beds could be destroyed within the next five to 10 years, the study suggests.

Mumby said a short-term solution may be to try to relocate the turtles to less populated reserves, but he added that larger conservation issues must be addressed by the government. Pesticide, fertilizer and sediment runoff from nearby mining and agriculture operations, including rapidly expanded palm oil plantations, are smothering seagrass beds in areas outside the decade-old reserve. The turtles are also congregating in the protected area for safety because they are being poached outside. The heavy hunting of sharks, a major turtle predator, could be another factor contributing to the rising numbers.

Many of the turtles feeding off Derawan do not nest there and instead come from outside areas including Malaysia and the Philippines, said Windia Adnyana, a turtle expert from Udayana University in Bali who has worked for years in the marine reserve. And while there are more turtles coming to eat, he said the number nesting on the island continues to decline with an estimated 10,000 turtles returning to the beach where they were born every year.

"It's alarming in a place like Derawan," he said. "Protecting the species alone is not enough. There has to be consideration about the capacity of the food itself, the seagrass." Seagrass is part of an important ecosystem, providing food, shelter and nurseries for different types of fish, mammals and invertebrates. It helps maintain the health of coral reefs, mangroves and marshes, while also preventing erosion and keeping water clear by trapping sediment coming from land. □

U.N. climate chief promotes green investments

EDITH M. LEDERER
Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP)

— The U.N. climate chief urged investors Wednesday to move out of high-carbon assets like oil and coal and into assets promoting renewable energy, greater energy efficiency and more sustainable ways of doing business. Christiana Figueres told the 2014 Investor Summit on Climate Risk at U.N. headquarters that the switch to greener investments is essential to tackle climate change. "The continued and dangerous rise in greenhouse gases in the atmosphere is in large part the direct result of past investments in energy and mobility systems based on the use of fossil fuels," she said. Figueres said new investments must help reverse

"this unsustainable trend, and quickly, if the world is to have a chance of staying under a 2 degree Celsius (3.6 degree Fahrenheit) temperature rise." International climate negotiators agreed at the 2009 U.N. climate change conference in Copenhagen that global warming this century shouldn't increase by more than 2 degrees Celsius to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. According to the International Energy Agency, \$36 trillion of global investment will be needed in clean energy by 2050 to meet this goal — which amounts to \$1 trillion a year. Last year, investment in renewable energy and energy smart technologies dropped 12 percent to \$254 billion, after falling 9 percent in 2012 to

\$288.9 billion from the record \$317.9 billion in 2011, according to figures released Wednesday by the research company Bloomberg New Energy Finance. Michael Liebreich, the company's founder who chairs its advisory board, told the summit the reduced investment was a result of a sharp drop in the price of solar power technology and a drop in investments in clean energy by the U.S. and China, the two biggest investing countries. But he said there has been an investment surge in Japan, an increase in India, and broader investments in clean energy in Asia and Latin America. Figueres told The Associated Press that in 2012, about \$600 billion was invested in exploration and extraction of fossil fuels, double the in-



In this Oct. 21, 2013, photo, an earth mover, and a dump truck move through the open lignite pit at Liberty Mine adjacent to the Mississippi Power's Kemper County energy facility in central Mississippi near DeKalb.

Associated Press

vestment in clean energy. In addition, she said, governments are estimated to be subsidizing the consumption and production of fossil fuels worldwide by between \$600 billion and \$1 trillion annually. Figueres said the lower level of investment in clean energy isn't surprising "because we have built the global economy for 150 years on the back of fossil fuels." Figueres welcomed the

presence of over 500 investors at the day-long conference, saying there is "a growing realization that they can play a very significant role in shifting capital," in changing government policy, and in increasing their profitability with green investments. Figueres is heading to next week's World Economic Forum in Switzerland, where climate change will be a major topic on the agenda. □

Climax to CBS series filmed 8 years ago

DAVID BAUDER

AP Television Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Producers filmed the climactic scene of CBS' "How I Met Your Mother" finale eight years ago, fearing the actors involved would become unrecognizable, and have kept it under wraps ever since.

The Monday-night comedy concludes after nine seasons on March 31 with a one-hour episode.

The comedy's central conceit is that it's a story told by actor Josh Radnor's character, Ted, to his teenage children about how their mom and dad met. The children, played by David Henrie and Lyndsy Fonseca, were depicted in the series' early days sitting on a couch, shifting uncomfortably in boredom as their dad narrated the long-winded story.

Although the mother, played by actress Cristin Milioti, was introduced in last season's final episode, the details of how they met still haven't been revealed. Series co-creators Carter Bays and Craig Thomas knew from the beginning exactly how that question would be answered, and always planned it for the show's final episode. And the kids on the couch would be a key component of that ending.

Yet in 2006, with the series in its second season and the possibility existing that it could be on for several more years, Bays and Thomas realized they'd better film that final scene right away.

After all, the actors were growing up, would soon look different and wouldn't even be able to fit in the clothes they wear while sitting on the couch.

So one day Bays and Thomas brought the young actors in, closed the set to all but one camera operator, and filmed the two-minute scene that will bring the series to a close.

Henrie and Fonseca signed non-disclosure agreements.

So intent on keeping the secret, Fonseca put it out of her mind and doesn't

even remember what they filmed, Thomas said on Wednesday.

Through all the seasons that have come since, there hasn't been any reason to change it, he said.

"It's been the plan all along," he said. "What you see on March 31 has been the plan."

We leave the series with a certain message that we wanted to convey."

Producers filmed some extra scenes with Henrie and Fonseca to give themselves some flexibility with writing the final episode, but the central idea is the same, said Pamela Fryman, the show's director and executive producer.

The rest of the actors are scheduled to film the final episode on Feb. 28.

Milioti may not have had her job if the series hadn't lasted as long, however. Bays said producers had contingency plans for another mother — the baker character Victoria that Ted met during the show's first season — if CBS canceled the series.

It was touch-and-go for the first few seasons until "How I Met Your Mother" built a consistent following. "We really did have an eight-year plan," Bays said. "It turned out to be nine years."

In fact, the show has received criticism this year that its stretch marks are showing, that it is marking time until the finale. Some Asian-Americans reacted angrily to this Monday's episode, with actors dressed in Asian attire for silly scenes that the producers intended as an homage to kung fu movies.

Bays said the final season has been "a challenge," but the producers said they are proud they tried to push themselves creatively by essentially setting the ninth season in one weekend — the wedding weekend for Neil Patrick Harris' character Barney to Robin, played by Cobie Smulders.

The creators are now at work on a proposed spinoff, with a new set of characters telling a woman's story about how she met



This image released by CBS shows, clockwise from foreground left, Alyson Hannigan, Neal Patrick Harris, Cobie Smulders and Josh Radnor in a scene from "How I Met Your Mother." Producers filmed the climactic scene of CBS' "How I Met Your Mother" finale eight years ago for fears that the actors involved would become unrecognizable, and have kept it under wraps ever since. The Monday night comedy concludes after nine seasons on March 31 with a one-hour episode.

Associated Press

her children's father. The actors on "How I Met Your Mother" won't be involved, although Bays joked he may pay one of the current crew "a lot of money" to come in as a guest star in a

third season when they run out of ideas.

Not all of the current cast members know how their show will end, although Harris said he cornered the producers at an office party recently and compelled them to tell the story.

"It's more complicated than you would assume,"

Harris said, "and for all of our fans, they won't be disappointed." □



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Oscar odds, ends, facts and figures

The Associated Press

Fun stuff to know about Thursday's Oscar nominations:

FIRST-TIMERS: It's never too late for an Academy Award nomination. Just ask June Squibb, who is a first-time Oscar nominee for her supporting role in "Nebraska" at 84 years old. Other first-time acting nominees joining her this year are Chiwetel Ejiofor, Matthew McConaughey, Barkhad Abdi, Michael Fassbender, Jared Leto, Sally Hawkins and Lupita Nyong'o.

RUSSELL HUSTLE: After receiving back-to-back nods for directing and writing, "American Hustle" and "Silver Linings Playbook" director David O. Russell joins the company of six other filmmakers who have achieved the same feat: Billy Wilder, David Lean, Joseph L. Mankiewicz, John Huston, Richard Brooks and, most recently, Woody Allen for "Annie Hall" (1977) and "Interiors" (1978).

RECORD BREAKERS: Meryl Streep extends her lead as

the most nominated performer with her 18th nomination for "August: Osage County." Woody Allen adds to his record number of writing nominations with his 16th nod for "Blue Jasmine." "The Wind Rises" filmmaker Hayao Miyazaki now has the most nods in the animated feature film category with three.

TWICE AS NICE: "American Hustle" and "Her" producer Megan Ellison is the first woman and the fourth person to receive two best picture nods in the same year. She joins Francis Ford



In a Feb. 24, 2013, file photo Meryl Streep appears at the Oscars at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. Associated Press

Coppola and Fred Roos, who were both nominated for "The Godfather: Part II" and "The Conversation" in 1974, and Scott Rudin, up for "The Social Network" and "True Grit" in 2010.

RINSE AND REPEAT: Seven of this year's nominees are previous acting winners: Christian Bale, Cate Blanchett, Sandra Bullock, Judi Dench, Meryl Streep, Julia Roberts and Jennifer Lawrence, who is the youngest three-time acting nominee at 23 years old. Lawrence and her "American Hustle" co-stars Bradley Cooper and Amy Adams were also nominated last year. □

Russell Johnson, 'Gilligan' professor, has died



This Oct. 2, 1978 file photo shows Russell Johnson, as the professor, posing during filming of a two-hour reunion show, "The Return from Gilligan's Island," in Los Angeles. Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The actor who played "The Professor" on "Gilligan's Island," Russell Johnson, has died. His agent, Mike Eisenstadt, says Johnson died Thursday morning at his home in Washington State of natural causes. He was 89.

Johnson was a busy but little-known character actor when he was cast in the slapstick 1960s comedy about seven people marooned on an uncharted Pacific island. □

Oh 'Happy' day: Pharrell speechless over Oscar nod



In this Nov. 6, 2013 file photo, Pharrell Williams attends the WSJ Magazine's Innovator Awards in New York. Williams' "Happy," from the "Despicable Me 2" soundtrack, was nominated for an Academy Award for best original song on Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014.

Associated Press

MESFIN FEKADU
AP Music Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A week before his big night at the Grammy Awards, Pharrell is happy — and speechless — over his Oscar nomination.

The producer-rapper-singer's "Happy," from the "Despicable Me 2" soundtrack, is nominated for best original song.

"Uh, speechless," Pharrell said in an interview Thursday after the nominations were announced. "Man, I am over the moon."

He was then speechless, trying to recall what he was doing when he got the news.

"Man, I'm sorry, I don't know," he said.

Pharrell was writing a "thank you" speech to radio stations for playing the upbeat song, which jumped 42 spots to No. 56 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart this week. The song is a No. 1 hit in the United Kingdom, Australia, Ireland, France, Germany and Switzerland.

The Oscar nomination is an-

other highlight in his massively successful year: He was the producer of two of 2012's biggest anthems — Robin Thicke's "Blurred Lines" and Daft Punk's "Get Lucky." Both songs are nominated for record of the year and best pop duo/group performance at the Grammy Awards.

The 40-year-old has seven nominations, tied in second place with Daft Punk, Macklemore & Ryan Lewis and Kendrick Lamar. Jay Z, the Grammy leader, has nine nominations.

He's also up for producer of the year and has two nominations for album of the year for producing on Daft Punk and Kendrick Lamar's albums.

He said the success of "Happy" nicely ties in all of his achievements, adding that he was meticulous about getting the song right — recording it nine times before nailing it.

His competition for the Oscar includes U2's "Ordinary Love" from "Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom," which won a Golden

Globe, and the Top 40 hit "Let It Go" from the "Frozen" soundtrack. Other nominees are "The Moon Song" by Karen O. of the Yeah Yeah Yeahs for Spike Jonze's "Her" and "Alone Not Yet Alone" by Bruce Broughton and Dennis Spiege.

"I used to stare at the TV as a child watching your actors and favorite actresses take it home," he said of attending the Oscars. "That's where Jack Nicholson stands or the guy that I look up to majorly, Wes Anderson. That's where his work is considered. I cannot believe we get to go." Pharrell has produced hits for Britney Spears, Justin Timberlake and Jay Z. He's in the studio working with Ed Sheeran, Jennifer Hudson, Usher, Kendrick Lamar and Jennifer Nettles, and scoring the upcoming "Spider-Man" film with Hans Zimmer. He recently signed with Columbia Records — home to Beyonce, Adele and One Direction — and will release an album this year. "It's some of my best work and that's because in the process I made it with my eyes closed," he said. "That's not a reflection of any sort of superiority in any way, shape or form. I didn't do a lot of looking around to try and figure it out. I just closed my eyes and made it by feeling it and I think that's why I am most proud of it."

Pharrell will open for Bruno Mars' tour, which will kick off April 18 in Honolulu.

"Can't wait to go out and make a cool moment with the ladies on the road," he said.

The Grammys will be presented Jan. 26 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. The Academy Awards will air March 2 from the Dolby Theatre in the Hollywood. □



Hammer Time



THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN
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My favorite story in Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee's fascinating new book, "The Second Machine Age," is when the Dutch chess grandmaster Jan Hein Donner was asked how he'd prepare for a chess match against a computer, like IBM's Deep Blue. Donner replied: "I would bring a hammer."

Donner isn't alone in fantasizing that he'd like to smash some recent advances in software and automation - think self-driving cars, robotic factories and artificially intelligent reservationists - which are not only replacing blue-collar jobs at a faster rate, but now also white-collar skills, even grandmasters!

Something very, very big happened over the last decade. It is being felt in every job, factory and school. My own shorthand is that the world went from "connected to hyperconnected" and, as a result, average is over, because employers now have so much easier, cheaper access to above-average software, automation and cheap genius from abroad. Brynjolfsson and McAfee, both at MIT, offer a more detailed explanation: We are at the start of the Second Machine Age.

The First Machine Age, they argue, was the Industrial Revolution that was born along with the steam engine in the late 1700s. This period was "all about power systems to augment human muscle," explained McAfee in an interview, "and each successive invention in that age delivered more and more power. But they all required humans to make decisions about them." Therefore, the inventions of this era actually made human control and labor "more valuable and important." Labor and machines were complementary.

In the Second Machine Age, though, argues Brynjolfsson, "we are beginning to automate a lot more cognitive tasks, a lot more of the control systems that determine what to use that power for. In many cases today artificially intelligent machines can make better decisions than humans." So humans and software-driven machines may increasingly be substitutes, not complements. What's making this possible, the authors argue, are three huge technological advances that just reached their tipping points, advances they describe as "exponential, digital and combinatorial."

To illustrate "exponential" they retell the story of the king who was so impressed with the man who invented chess that he offered him any reward. The inventor suggested rice to feed his family. He asked the king to

simply place a grain of rice on the first square of a chessboard and then have each subsequent square receive twice as many grains as the previous. The emperor agreed until he realized that 63 instances of doubling yields a fantastically big number, even starting with one grain - like 18 quintillion grains of rice, once you finish the second half of the chess board.

The authors compare this second half of the chessboard to Moore's Law about the relentless doubling of digital computing power about every two years. Unlike the steam engine, which was physical and doubled in performance every 70 years, computers "get better, faster than anything else, ever," says Brynjolfsson. Now that we're in the second half of the digital chessboard, you see cars that drive themselves in traffic, Jeopardy-champion supercomputers, flexible factory robots and pocket smartphones that are the equivalent of a supercomputer of just a generation ago.

Now add the spread of the Internet to both people and things - soon everyone on the planet will have a smartphone, and every cash register, airplane engine, student iPad and thermostat will be broadcasting digital data via the Internet. All this data means we can instantly discover and analyze patterns, instantly replicate what is working on a global scale and instantly improve what isn't working - whether it is eye surgery techniques, teaching fractions or how best to operate a GE engine at 30,000 feet. Suddenly, the speed and slope of improvement, they argue, gets very fast and steep.

Combinatorial advances mean you can take Google Maps and combine them with a smartphone app like Waze, through which drivers automatically transmit traffic conditions on their routes by just carrying their phone in their car, and meld both into a GPS system that not only tells you what the best route is to your destination but what the best route now is because it also sees all the traffic everywhere. Instantly, you're the smartest driver in town.

Put all these advances together, say the authors, and you can see that our generation will have more power to improve (or destroy) the world than any before, relying on fewer people and more technology. But it also means that we need to rethink deeply our social contracts, because labor is so important to a person's identity and dignity and to societal stability. They suggest that we consider lowering taxes on human labor to make it cheaper relative to digital labor, that we reinvent education so more people can "race with machines," not against them, that we do much more to foster the entrepreneurship that invents new industries and jobs, and even consider guaranteeing every American a basic income. We've got a lot of rethinking to do, they argue, because we're not only in a recession-induced employment slump. We're in technological hurricane reshaping the workplace - and it just keeps doubling. □



Enemies Of The Poor



PAUL KRUGMAN
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Suddenly it's OK, even mandatory, for politicians with national ambitions to talk about helping the poor. This is easy for Democrats, who can go back to being the party of FDR and LBJ. It's much more difficult for Republicans, who are having a hard time shaking their reputation for reverse Robin-Hoodism, for being the party that takes from the poor and gives to the rich.

And the reason that reputation is so hard to shake is that it's justified. It's not much of an exaggeration to say that right now Republicans are doing all they can to hurt the poor, and they would have inflicted vast additional harm if they had won the 2012 election. Moreover, GOP harshness toward the less fortunate isn't just a matter of spite (although that's part of it); it's deeply rooted in the party's ideology, which is why recent speeches by leading Republicans declaring that they do too care about the poor have been almost completely devoid of policy specifics.

Let's start with the recent Republican track record.

The most important current policy development in America is the rollout of the Affordable Care Act, aka Obamacare. Most Republican-controlled states are, however, refusing to implement

a key part of the act, the expansion of Medicaid, thereby denying health coverage to almost 5 million low-income Americans. And the amazing thing is that they're going to great lengths to block aid to the poor even though letting the aid through would cost almost nothing; nearly all the costs of Medicaid expansion would be paid by Washington.

Meanwhile, those Republican-controlled states are slashing unemployment benefits, education financing and more. As I said, it's not much of an exaggeration to say that the GOP is hurting the poor as much as it can.

What would Republicans have done if they had won the White House in 2012? Much more of the same. Bear in mind that every budget the GOP has offered since it took over the House in 2010 involves savage cuts in Medicaid, food stamps and other anti-poverty programs.

Still, can't Republicans change their approach? The answer, I'm sorry to say, is almost surely no.

First of all, they're deeply committed to the view that efforts to aid the poor are actually perpetuating poverty, by reducing incentives to work. And to be fair, this view isn't completely wrong. True, it's total nonsense when applied to unemployment insurance.

The notion that unemployment is high because we're "paying people not to work" is a fallacy (no matter how desperate you make the unemployed, their desperation does nothing to create more jobs) wrapped in a falsehood (very few people are choosing to remain unemployed and keep collecting benefit checks).

But our patchwork, uncoordinated system of anti-poverty programs does have the effect of penalizing efforts by lower-income households to improve their position: the more they earn, the fewer benefits they can collect. In effect, these households face very high marginal tax rates.

A large fraction, in some cases 80 cents or more, of each additional dollar they earn is clawed back by the government.

The question is what we could do to reduce these high effective tax rates. We could simply slash benefits; this would reduce the disincentive to work, but only by intensifying the misery of the poor. And the poor would become less productive as well as more miserable; it's hard to take advantage of a low marginal tax rate when you're suffering from poor nutrition and inadequate health care.

Alternatively, we could reduce the rate at which benefits phase out. In fact, one of the unheralded virtues of Obamacare is that it does just that. That is, it doesn't just improve the lot of the poor; it improves their incentives, because the subsidies families receive for health care fade out gradually with higher income, instead of simply disappearing for anyone too affluent to receive Medicaid.

But improving incentives this way means spending more, not less, on the safety net, and taxes on the affluent have to rise to pay for that spending. And it's hard to imagine any leading Republican being willing to go down that road - or surviving the inevitable primary challenge if he did.

The point is that a party committed to small government and low taxes on the rich is, more or less necessarily, a party committed to hurting, not helping, the poor.

Will this ever change? Well, Republicans weren't always like this. In fact, all of our major anti-poverty programs - Medicaid, food stamps, the earned-income tax credit - used to have bipartisan support. And maybe someday moderation will return to the GOP.

For now, however, Republicans are in a deep sense enemies of America's poor. And that will remain true no matter how hard the likes of Paul Ryan and Marco Rubio try to convince us otherwise. □

Security puzzle for the Super Bowl has to include new pieces

KEN BELSON

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As is the case for other major sporting events, securing the Super Bowl is a complex and nerve-racking task that involves the coordination of many law enforcement agencies, the use of technologies

dozen other events are planned in Brooklyn, the Upper West Side of Manhattan and beyond.

Representatives from the remaining teams in the playoffs - the Denver Broncos, the New England Patriots, the Seattle Seahawks and the San Francisco

league's chief security officer. "There are a number of private events, NFL events, and we look how they fit together. It's all a bunch of dominoes, and when you move one thing, it affects others."

New Jersey will have its share of logistical chal-

eral Assembly. Terrorists have taken aim at sporting events at least since the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich, and police agencies in the New York area have plenty of practice providing security at the World Series and other games.

November. "Unfortunately, this is the world we live in, so we learned from events around the world."

In effect, Super Bowl Boulevard will be like a parade and New Year's Eve rolled into one, for four days in a row. "The challenge here is, it's several days; it's a long time," said Ed Hartnett, the president of Brosnan Risk Consultants and a former deputy chief in the New York Police Department. "An event like this, people are coming out of buildings, coming up from the subways, walking back and forth. It's a lot bigger challenge in an area like this."

Hartnett said the police, supplemented by the NFL's security force, would do what they usually do: seal manhole covers, remove mailboxes and garbage cans, and alert shopkeepers and building managers in the many offices in the area while relying on closed-circuit cameras, license plate readers and other technologies, as well as bomb-sniffing dogs.

The Super Bowl, of course, is the most visible sporting event in the country, which is why law enforcement groups have all but barricaded the 750 acres where the stadium and other facilities sit.

The New Jersey State Police, which will have more than 500 officers at the game, will use canine units, radiation detectors and X-ray machines, and every car, truck and bus entering the Meadowlands Sports Complex, of which MetLife Stadium is a part, will be screened. Two sets of chain-link fences four miles long will circle the stadium to limit access and protect critical equipment like backup diesel generators. Seven large tents are being built as security checkpoints for everyone entering the stadium starting more than four hours before kickoff.

Each fan will be allowed to bring only a small, clear plastic bag into the stadium, a policy that started after the Boston Marathon bombings. □



Col. Rick Fuentes, right, superintendent of the New Jersey State Police, speaks during a news conference on security for the Super Bowl at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J., Jan. 15, 2014. Officials say this year's events, at locations stretching from New York to New Jersey, mean security planning will be one of the most complex efforts in the game's history.

(Chang W. Lee/The New York Times)

like cameras and radiation detectors, and the identification of potential troublemakers.

But this year, the challenges will extend far beyond the Feb. 2 game site in East Rutherford, N.J., to the heart of Manhattan, where the NFL will turn a stretch of Broadway into Super Bowl Boulevard. Those 13 blocks, from Times Square to Herald Square, will become an open-air football festival that one FBI official called a "street fair on steroids."

Media day, normally held in a stadium, will be at Prudential Center, an arena in Newark, and the media center will be at a hotel in Times Square. About two

49ers - met this week with league officials in Jersey City, where the two Super Bowl teams will stay, to discuss logistical issues.

The mix of locations across multiple jurisdictions, and across state lines, is one reason the NFL is working with more than 100 law enforcement agencies to protect the weeklong extravaganza. The league is also spending more than \$10 million to hire thousands of private security officers to patrol MetLife Stadium, Super Bowl Boulevard and elsewhere.

Compared with other Super Bowls, "there are things that are more complex than we've been looking at," said Jeffrey Miller, the

league's chief security officer. "There are a number of private events, NFL events, and we look how they fit together. It's all a bunch of dominoes, and when you move one thing, it affects others."

Since 9/11, the federal government has considered the Super Bowl a Level 1 event. That means the event is eligible for assistance from the Department of Homeland Security, and federal agencies like the FBI and the Federal Aviation Administration are involved as well.

But New York is well versed in hosting big events, from parades to New Year's Eve celebrations to meetings of the United Nations Gen-

eral Assembly. Terrorists have taken aim at sporting events at least since the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich, and police agencies in the New York area have plenty of practice providing security at the World Series and other games.

Still, this is the first Super Bowl since the bombings at the Boston Marathon in April and the recent attacks in Russia ahead of the Winter Games in Sochi, so law enforcement will be even more vigilant. Officials from the New York Police Department, including its counterterrorism and intelligence units, have met with the Boston police to learn about the response to the bombings there.